THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

ATTITUDES OF COUNSELLORS AND POLICY-MAKERS AT ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRES ABOUT THE UNEMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYMENT

BY

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©

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled ATTITUDES OF COUNSELLORS AND POLICY-MAKERS AT ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRES ABOUT THE UNEMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYMENT submitted by JOHANNA FAULK in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to determine and analyse the attitudes and beliefs about unemployment and the factors which exacerbate or alleviate it held by gatekeepers at two Alberta Vocational Centres and policymakers responsible for Alberta Manpower policies. In addition, the ways in which the attitudes and beliefs were reflected in the policy and operations of the Alberta Vocational Centres were analysed.

A brief quantitative analysis of student and program data was included to provide some description of the effects of labour market segmentation on training programs.

The data on attitudes and beliefs of gatekeepers and policymakers were collected by means of semi-structured, open-ended interviews with participants. Data for the quantitative analysis were collected from an IBM tape containing student information obtained from the Alberta Vocational Centre registrars.

The findings from the interview data demonstrated that while there were differences in beliefs and attitudes between the two groups - policymakers and gatekeepers - there were virtually no differences among individuals within each group. Both groups did make individualistic attributions for the causes of unemployment, although the policy-makers saw increased training as the means by which unemployment could be reduced, while the gatekeepers believed increased individual psychological counselling would help unemployed individuals change the personal attitudes seen as the cause of unemployment.

The findings from the analysis of quantitative data available on students demonstrated the relative ineffectiveness of the various skills training programs offered at the Alberta Vocational Centres in changing the employment prospects for students. Using "Program Entered" as a proxy variable for the segment of the labour market in which the students would find work upon completion, it was found that for the majority of students, their condition worsened or remained the same.

Implications of this study for a more humane and effective use of resources directed towards decreasing unemployment are suggested.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the Depression and the acceptance by governments in Western democracies of responsibility for managing the economy, unemployment has become a salient political issue. This can be witnessed by activities in the most recent Canadian federal election. The range of policy responses to this issue has been relatively limited and can be classified as to whether they are intended to influence 1)the supply of labour, or 2) the demand for labour. In Canada, as in Britain and the U.S.,responses to the issue are generally seen as requiring a trade-off between unemployment and inflation. Whatever the distinction, high unemployment rates seem to require some sort of governmental policy response because of a concern that rising unemployment will lead to a potentially restive group of increasingly marginalized individuals.

The concern over unemployment and the possibility of social unrest is not new: the high unemployment rate of demobilized veterans after World War I and their concentration in the cities resulted in the municipal governments' consequent pleas with Ottawa to provide relief to the increasingly angry veterans. This led Ottawa to provide short-term relief for the winter months. Thus began Canada's entry into Federal-Provincial (as opposed to local, as welfare had been) responsibility for unemployment.

The fear of potential discontent among the unemployed exists even today and continues to provide an impetus to government policies which are formulated in response to the perceived threat. Then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau echoed this sentiment in his comment on the particularly high rate of unemployment among young people when he acknowledged that high unemployment is "...creating social discontent and other uncertainties in the minds of the young people." (Globe and Mail, Sept. 24, 1983)

While potential threats to the "social fabric" which unemployment represents are possibly real, the organizability of the poor and unemployed is perhaps overestimated. Even during the Depression, only relatively concentrated groups were organized and mass organization never occurred. Nevertheless, the fear persists and while the Canadian government has continued to provide programs during times of high unemployment in order to forestall mass discontent, generally the programs have been remarkably similar in whatever the provisions each has made. Richardson and Henning in Unemployment: Policy Responses of Western Democracies (1984) suggest that as unemployment becomes a key political issue, many responses by government appear to assume that it requires "political management" rather than economic or technical management.

Therefore, the policy response may only be a symbolic activity. Hence, they tend to use traditional labour policies that can exhibit substantial goal substitution - using the policies to manage unemployment statistics rather than helping match skills with real demands.

This can be seen in the results of a study of real and insurance-induced unemployment in Canada, conducted by Grubel, Maki, and Sax in 1975 in which it was found that changes in unemployment insurance programs "...can affect reported unemployment rates by altering worker's work/leisure tradeoff and job-search behaviour". (p.174) Government programs for training and retraining workers are provided in order to increase the efficiency of labour markets, but also, they maintain, "...to reduce the availability of low-skilled labour so that the market will react by forcing up the prices of goods and services requiring such labour." (p.189) This can happen, they suggest, only if there is no concomitant rise in the amount of unemployment insurance benefits to cover cost-of-living increases, which is what invariably occurs.

Therefore, it seems that there might be a possible motivation for governments to continue to allow high unemployment:

> For example, it may induce wage moderation more effectively than statutory incomes policy can; it may induce changed attitudes to productivity, innovation and flexible working practices; it may

> reduce the incidence of strikes; organizations, both public and private can be easier to manage against a background of high unemployment; employers may be able to recruit at a higher level of skill when they are faced by a large pool of applicants. A large pool of unemployed may be necessary to facilitate...fundamental economic and technical restructuring...
> (Richardson and Henning,1984:9)

In reality, to do nothing is too politically costly.

Historically, relief or welfare was the only recourse for the unemployed and indigent, and it was provided on the principle of "less eligibility", under which the income provided through relief could not be greater than the income in wages of the lowest paid labourer, i.e., it was believed that the maintenance of the "work ethic" could only be accomplished if the conditions of relief were so degrading as to make any kind of work preferable to relief - to enforce work. The scale of unemployment in the Depression forced the Canadian government to become a mass employer through the initiation of public-works programs, but the advent of World War II and technological changes in the economy altered the governmental response to policies which focused on the supply of labour. While the demand side of the demand/supply equation had changed, the maintenance of the "work ethic" was central. The need to "enforce work" is one of the reasons given by Adams, et. al in The Real Poverty Report (1971) for the government's refusal to institute a Guaranteed Annual Income.

The transformation of the work ethic into work enforcement ideology has consequences for the types of attributions made for unemployment and the types of policies and programs developed with which to combat it. The belief that many people would not work unless compelled to do so assumes the obverse: if people are not working, it must be their own fault, hence the notion of individual responsibility. These propositions, in effect, "blame the victim". A more subtle form of this notion is the focus on programs designed to alter the individual who is unemployed rather than the structure which caused the unemployment. The move from provision of employment during the Depression to Manpower training programs just before World War II is an example of the change in focus by the government to a notion of individual responsibility for unemployment.

The recent economic recession in Alberta which began in the early 1980s has had an enormous impact on provincial manpower policies and programs. The provision of short- and long-term skills training courses and student financial support for individuals enrolled in those programs experienced growth during the economic boom of the 1970's as Alberta tried to keep up with economic expansion. The provision of training appeared to be successful as many students found employment before finishing courses: the rate of success was close to 100%. However, the apparent success of skills training provision began to diminish when the economy slowed. Rather than change the policy response and consequently the programs, while the economy changed, provision remained the same though with declining revenues. The decline in revenues from which the programs were funded led to a "tightening up" of entry requirements for programs and financial aid to students in those programs. The effect has been to make the notion of individual responsibility for unemployment more rigorously asserted by the formulators of provincial manpower policy and the gatekeepers within the provincially-administered institutions providing the skills training.

Suitability criteria for entry into programs, a determination made by counsellors at the institutions regarding the likelihood of a student's success in moving from training to employment, have become judgments of individual worthiness, characterized as "motivation", "right attitude", and particular notions of "self-reliance" - all of which are notions about individual qualities considered to increase the likelihood of success in moving from training to employment. The separation of those deemed worthy from those deemed unworthy is the task faced by the gatekeepers. Their notions of what constitutes "worthiness" are deeply imbedded in middle class notions of individualism. It is the existence of these notions which will be demonstrated in the discussion of interviews with the counsellors and policy-makers, particularly as the notions demonstrate an attitude to the relationship between education and employment which is demonstrably false.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

The Federal responsibility for employment, unemployment and manpower training came about as a result of the mass unemployment during the Depression. It has been suggested that no coherent program was developed at the time and most programs were of short duration with the expectation that the economy would turn around and eventually provide jobs. The government did make efforts to provide relief when pressed by financially overburdened cities concerned with the growing population of agitated unemployed. Municipal relief arrangements, previously a local matter, could not survive the onslaught of the increasing numbers of individuals requiring them, thus beginning the entry of Federal responsibility for employment and unemployment.

In tracing the history of relief arrangements in the United States (Piven and Cloward, 1971) and Canada (Struthers, 1983), the growth and constriction of the arrangements are charted. A comparison of U.S. and Canadian relief arrangements demonstrates the similarity of responses despite the popular conception of fundamental social and economic differences between the two countries.

The outcomes lead Piven and Cloward to conclude:

> Relief arrangements are ancillary to economic arrangements. Their chief function is to regulate labor and they do that in two general ways. First, when mass unemployment leads to outbreaks of turmoil, relief programs are ordinarily initiated or expanded to absorb enough of the unemployed to restore order; then, as turbulence subsides, the relief system contracts, expelling those who are needed to populate the labor market. (1971: 3)

However, while the forms of policy responses to unemployment may be the same, i.e. relief programs, the epistemological bases for the programs may be different, and it is those differences which can alter the outcomes and effects of apparently similar responses. Witness the difference in outcomes of the provision of public works employment (PWE) during the Depression in the United States and in Canada: Unlike the CCC in the United States, the Canadian relief camps were designed to remove the potentially dangerous groups of unemployed single men from the cities. According to Struthers, the Canadian relief camps provided meaningless, ill-paid and degrading work - it was a transparent attempt merely to remove the men from the cities rather than provide them with work - and because of this, the government attempt to prevent social unrest had the opposite effect:

> ...[m]ore than communist agitation, it was the government-sponsored perversion of capitalist values which radicalized the men in the camps. (Struthers: p.134)

However punitive the effect of the relief camps, the change in the economy brought about by World War II resulted in policy changes which would, in the long-run, be more insidiously punitive. As Piven and Cloward observe:

> During the depressions, public works programs are often initiated to augment the faltering demand for labor. But when a process of modernization leaves many people unable or unwilling to work, relief arrangements are usually reorganized to channel recipients into the private market, overcoming their reluctance to work with coercion, and overcoming their low market value with subsidies.
> (1971:344)

The move from provision of employment during the Depression to manpower training programs just before and after World War II demonstrates the change in focus. Struthers (1983) discusses the reestablishment of the National Employment Commission in 1936 under the King government:

> Since recovery was already under way, the chief concern of the Commission should not be employment, but employability.
> (1983:155) (emphasis mine)

Employability, which is a focus on the characteristics of the individual which render him or her valuable to an employer, is embedded in a view of human nature which, when held by those responsible for policy formulation, exerts a powerful influence on the breadth and depth and coordination of the effects of policy. The notion that people in different social classes have different natures and hence, motivations, might be seen to be reflected in the policies of Prime Minister Mulroney: by initiating policies which lower taxes and help create higher profits, it appears as if he believes that the rich will exert themselves in response to rewards, while by initiating policies which de-index or even cut social welfare programs, it appears as if he believes that the poor respond only to punishment. This conception of differing human natures is reflected in the policies and programs initiated by Alberta Manpower which will be discussed later. It is pertinent here, however, to describe the general legislation and structures developed by Canada and latterly, by Alberta, in which the aforementioned historical notions and conceptions have been concretized.

ALBERTA MANPOWER AND THE ALBERTA VOCATIONAL TRAINING ACT

A contemporary manifestation of the historical policies designed to address the issues of unemployment and manpower training was the National Training Act, the focus of which is employability. Under Ottawa's legislated reponsibility for manpower policies and provision of skills training under the National Training Act, each province entered into an agreement with Ottawa under which Ottawa would purchase seats in provincially-designated training institutions for the training and re-training of individuals registered with Canada Employment Centres in each province. While national training priorities were identified by Ottawa, each province was allowed to identify regional or local training needs, seats for which were negotiated with and paid for by Ottawa. While education is a provincial reponsibility, many of the skills training programs had academic upgrading included in or as a prerequisite to entry into skills training. During the 1970's, the academic upgrading component of training institutions grew to more than 50% of the programs offered. In 1981, citing the provinces' responsibility for education, Ottawa withdrew all purchases of seats for academic upgrading below grade 8. The determination of grade 8 as the cut-off point was made because many skills training programs provided by Ottawa required a minimum of grade 8 for entry, though most were higher. Provincial negotiations for seat purchase were carried out by different departments in each province; Alberta was one of the few provinces to have a distinct provincial Manpower department.

Alberta Manpower, when formerly joined with Alberta Advanced Education, had been responsible for providing (under the Alberta Occupational Training Act, later changed to the Alberta Vocational Training Act) funding for short-term, ad hoc training programs, student allowances for individuals entering programs and negotiating the seat-purchase arrangements with the Federal government.

allocated its own budget after the split from Advanced Education. In 1982, Alberta Manpower's budget was $55 million and by 1984, it had grown to $189 million. The largest branch of Alberta Manpower is the Employment Development Branch, under which Vocational Training Services (which provides student allowances) and Vocational Training Programs (which provides funding for short-term or ad hoc training programs) are administered.

Because many individuals in need of vocational training were found to lack the requisite skills in reading and writing in order to undertake skills training, traditionally academic upgrading has been offered in conjunction with skills training, both in Alberta and in the rest of Canada. The addition of academic upgrading to skills training can be seen as an extension of human capital notions rather than a departure from them. The belief, in human capital theory, of the returns to the individual and to the society, of investment in education in no way predetermines the type of education in which to invest. During times of economic expansion, the notion appeared to be true. However, a challenge to human capital theory - economic segmentation analysis - describes the situation somewhat differently: That rather than a continuous arithmetic relationship between increases in educational attainment and increases in wages, in fact, that relationship only holds true for certain segments of capital notions rather than a departure from them. The belief, in human capital theory, of the returns to the individual and to the society, of investment in education in no way predetermines the type of education in which to invest. During times of economic expansion, the notion appeared to be true. However, a challenge to human capital theory - economic segmentation analysis - describes the situation somewhat differently: That rather than a continuous arithmetic relationship between increases in educational attainment and increases in wages, in fact, that relationship only holds true for certain segments of the labour force, while for a large part of the labour force there is no relationship between education and wages. During times of economic recession and decreases in the numbers and kinds of jobs, this division is particularly evident: the effects of labour market segmentation remain despite increases in education and training. Nevertheless, Alberta Manpower continues to provide training programs during times of recession.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The purpose of the present study is two-fold: to determine and analyse the attitudes and beliefs about unemployment and the factors which exacerbate or alleviate it held by gatekeepers at the Alberta Vocational Centres and policymakers responsible for Alberta Manpower policies and; to analyse how these attitudes and beliefs are reflected in the policy and operations of the Alberta Vocational Centres. A brief quantitative analysis of student and program data is included to provide some description of the effects of labour market segmentation on training programs.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As revenues decline during times of economic recession, obviously effectiveness in the use of resources becomes a priority for governments. If the present use of resources is not changing the situation for which they are intended, then it is important to investigate whether the source of the problem is the policy or the implementation of that policy which requires change.

ASSUMPTIONS

1.That the segment of the labour market for which students are trained is a reasonable proxy variable for the segment in which they will work.

2.That interview subjects' reports of their own beliefs and behaviour are the best source of data for investigation of attitudes and resultant behaviours.

3.That while it would be unreasonable to assume that there is a one-to-one correspondence between belief and behaviour (the complexities of the human psyche noted in studies of the psychology of human behaviour can attest to that), and therefore, reasons given may not result in particular actions, the overall effect of particular shared beliefs does influence the choices made by individuals and the outcomes of those choices.

LIMITATIONS

The primary limitation to this study is that, while it is the effect of counsellors' attitudes which is under study, there are no data collected on students' perceptions and behavioural responses to those attitudes which might mitigate for or against them.

DELIMITATIONS

The study is delimited to only two of the four Alberta Vocational Centres in the province. In addition, the span of time under investigation is a two-year period. Only students who are native-speakers of English were considered in the statistical analysis as the situation of immigrants enrolled in English as a Second Language courses was considered to be sufficiently different as to make them worthy of separate study.

ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction, Chapter II comprises the conceptual framework for the study and Chapter III details the research methods and data collection. In Chapter IV, the results of the data collection are reported and in

Chapter V there is a discussion of the findings and implications suggested by the findings.

CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In the decade preceding the 1980s, the economy of Alberta experienced unparalleled growth due to the boom in the oil industry, the primary industry in Alberta's resource-based economy. The demand for labour, both skilled and un-skilled, resulted in an inmigration of workers to the province as well as a growth of Federal and Provincial employment training programs designed to provide marketable labour to industry. The governmental role of matching the supply of labour to the demand for that labour, an historical role of the Federal government since the Depression and a role the Province had assumed in a limited way since the end of World War II, was almost outstripped by the exponential growth in demand. The province of Alberta increased the scope of its role and formulated policies and programs consonant with its enlarged role. The policies were embedded in particular notions about the relationship between education and employment; the value of work and consequently, the value of those who do not work. Interviews with the individuals responsible for the formulation of Provincial manpower policies and the gatekeepers in the provincially-administered institutions in which the policies are implemented demonstrate the virtual unanimity of belief, evidenced in their explanations, which those individuals share regarding those particular notions. It is important therefore, to trace the historical roots and contemporary manifestations of these notions to understand their continued existence despite empirical evidence which would belie their validity and effectiveness in overcoming the problems they are meant to address.

THE VALUE OF WORK

That work occupies a central place in the lives of the majority of individuals in a modern industrial society cannot be disputed. The centrality of work in the lives of Canadians was demonstrated in the results of a survey of Canadian attitudes to work and their job satisfaction, commissioned by the Federal government in 1975. Though work and employment do not really mean the same thing (employment being work performed for pay), they have come to be interchangeable in meaning at present. Notions of productivity in North America, reflected in the aggregate expression of Gross Domestic Product, only count as productive work that done for pay, whether in the form of wages or income. Work done in the home, as is the work of housewives, and community service work done by volunteers are not included in traditional calculations of productivity in which wages and income have come to be the means by which productivity is quantified. Therefore, the pecuniary rewards of our society, in the form of wages and income are distributed on the basis of particular kinds of work performed. In an attempt to explain the unequal distribution of income in our society, explanations of the differing productivity of different kinds of work are often offered.

While monetary gain is _a_ significant, if not the _most_ significant reward in this society, status and prestige are rewards as well, though more elusive to quantify. An enormous body of sociological literature has been devoted to the study of status and prestige which accrue to various occupations as distinct from the income associated with those occupations.

By and large, status and income are highly and positively correlated despite a few anomalies, as in the case of church ministers who have relatively high status but low incomes. According to Frank Parkin (1971), the backbone of the reward system in a capitalist society, both in terms of status and of income, is the occupational order which is arranged in a hierarchy from the professional to unskilled manual. Therefore, for Parkin, the notion of differing productivity as an explanation of differential rewards does not constitute an explanation but a value judgment.

But the question is not really _whether_ the rewards are unequal - they are - but why they are unequal and whether the inequality can be overcome. Therefore, a discussion of productivity, whether as an empirically-based explanation or value judgment is still germane to this study.

Productivity and the Protestant Work Ethic

The idea that reward is based on productivity (which includes a notion of effort) has its roots in Weber's 1905 thesis on Protestantism and Capitalism. The notion that if an individual works hard, i.e. makes an effort, he or she will be rewarded according to that effort, hence his or her productivity. In a review of the literature on the Protestant work ethic (PWE), Adrien Furnham (1984) traces all of the attempts psychologists have made to conceptualize the notion of the PWE and test for its existence in individuals and correlate the existence with a variety of other attitudes. In addition to citing the difficulties with the conceptualizations, Furnham also demonstrates that, even were the existence of PWE to be demonstrated, its existence is not a predictor of income and work attitudes. He offers the explanation of Jarrett and Kelvin (1984-quoted in Furnham) that Weber's notion of a work ethic is in reality a wealth ethic; that differing rewards based on effort is an ideological justification for the unequal distribution and amassing of wealth. In order that the position of the wealthy in society not be threatened, the confounding of effort with reward has to be maintained as an internalized attitude towards work by the whole of society. Whereas in pre-industrial society, the legitimacy of the wealthy was based on ascription and birth, our present attitudes to work...

> ...are in some senses modern, that is, they are not axiomatic, not the result of some innate disposition of the human mind and body, not universal...The expectation of consistent and dependable performance among workers was part of a framework in which economic values had attained the highest regard, economic goals had displaced other social or spiritual objectives, and industrial requirements had become more demanding in terms of the requisite behaviour of subordinates.
>
> (Anthony, 1977: 301)

In other words, as work has changed through industrialization, and though not the inequalities in the distribution of rewards but the basis on which that distribution is made, different bases have had to be found on which to make the ideological appeal for work:

> The very notion of launching a direct appeal for committed work on behalf of the owner now runs the risk, in a mature industrial community, of arousing a cynical response from those at whom it is directed. We rarely observe examples of such appeals, unless they are launched from the wider premise of concern with the national economy...
>
> (Ibid: 306)

It is precisely the wider premise of concern with the national economy which is being evoked at present as an explanation for the high unemployment rates and slow growth of the GNP in Canada. Of particular concern in recent years, especially in comparison with Japan's "economic miracle", has been the assumption that the sluggishness of the Canadian economy is due to lower productivity on the part of Canadian workers, despite improved technology. While many economists maintain that the high wages of Canadian labour in relation to labour's low productivity has made Canada non-competitive internationally, Uri Zohar, in a study of the manufacturing industry for the Canadian Institute for Economic Policy (1982) maintains that the data in the study...

> ...show that labour productivity is not the main problem in the Canadian economy...[T]he results of the aggregate econometric analysis in the manufacturing sector as a whole and the specific industry-level analysis...[leads me to conclude] that the productivity decline can be attributed more to a failure of an aspect of capital development, that is, much capital in the manufacturing sector is old and new capital has not always embraced newer and more efficient technology.
>
> (p.8)

Other authors have expressed similar concern over the implication of the Canadian worker as responsible for economic decline. Partly, their concern is over the attribution of unemployment to increasing technological sophistication and automation. It has been asserted that the qualitative advances in industrial technology have increased the levels of skill required by the labour force and that the consequent unemployment generated by technological change is due to the lack of advanced skills in parts of the labour force, i.e. the unemployment we are now witnessing is "structural". Despite the positive economic and social claims made for increased automation and technological sophistication, some authors do not predict that the world of high technology is a major source of future job growth, in which the unemployed, given the opportunity to upgrade outdated skills, will be employed. According to Bright (1981), Rothschild (1981), and Rumberger and Levin (1982), the expression of percentage growth of the new high tech jobs is misleading: the actual number of new jobs in that area is lower than in the service sector.

The real growth in the service sector, in which one-third to one-half of the entire labour force of Alberta was employed as of April, 1975, is perhaps a more significant trend than previously believed. Rather than the need for increased skills in the labour force, the de-skilling of jobs has created a repetitious and routine form of labour which makes the distinction between "blue collar" and "white collar" archaic; at best, according to Braverman (1974), one can talk about operatives and clericals. This particular transformation of work (documented also in Canada by Hunter in 1981)- the downgrading of skills rather than the upgrading of them - would appear to contradict the call for increasing skills in the labour force. The deskilling of much work which has changed the traditional occupations of skilled craftspeople into that of machine operatives has not been without problems, as Braverman asserts:

> As it presents itself to most of the sociologists and psychologists concerned with the study of work and workers, the problem is not that of the degradation of men and women, but the difficulties raised by the reactions, conscious and unconscious, to that degradation. It is therefore not at all fortuitous that most orthodox social scientists adhere firmly, indeed desperately, to the dictum that their task is not the study of subjective phenomena to which these give rise: the degrees of "satisfaction" and "dissatisfaction" elicited by their questionnaires.
>
> (p.141)

In addition to the transformation of the conditions of much work, so has there been a concomitant transformation of wages: the "value" of unskilled labour is considerably lower than that of skilled. The payment of an hourly wage rather than a weekly wage has historically distinguished manual labour from nonmanual labour. The divorce of a worker's living needs from his or her usefulness to someone else (expressed as wages), has long been accepted in our culture. This commodification of labour power is further intensified by the division of forms of payment of wages into yearly salaries and hourly or weekly wages. The form of the payment is an indication of how the labour power is valued. Paul Willis in his study of working class youth in England, Learning To Labour (1977), makes the distinction that:

> In middle class professions it is clear that the yearly salary is paid in exchange for the use of

> continuous and flexible services. Remuneration here is not based on the particular amount of time spent on the job and of course those "on the staff" are expected to work overtime and at home for no extra cash. Such workers, their wage form makes clear, are being paid for what they are: for the use of their capacities, for their general potential as managers, accountants, etc. The social implications of the weekly wage packet are very different. The general capacity of labour power which is recognized by the salary form is here broken up into weekly lumps...Weekly wages, not yearly salaries, mark the giving of labour. The quantity of the wage packet is one quantitative passing of time. Its diminution is loss of measured time, its increase "overtime". With such riveting it is that much easier to overlook the real, continuous, sensuous and variable quality of "labour power".
> (p.131-32)

But, despite the degradation of much work and the low pay of many jobs in the growing service sector, a growing number of Canadians continue to enter the labour force. Certainly economic necessity is a primary reason, but the attitudes to work (as demonstrated by the results of the Canadian Work Values and Job Satisfaction Study) would appear to be more ingrained than solely economic compulsion could account for. The way in which those who do not work are viewed, historically and at present, might provide and indication of the source and persistence of attitudes to work.

THOSE WHO DO NOT WORK

Unless an individual is independently wealthy (that is, independent from having to work) not working or being unemployed for a considerable length of time generally means that one is poor or living at a subsistence level. Despite the development of modern welfare arrangments and the introduction of unemployment insurance after World War II, the income provided by these transfer payments and the stigma attached to their acceptance makes them virtually punitive. This is not without reason, however, for as described by Piven and Cloward in Regulating The Poor (1971), "to demean and punish those who do not work is to exalt by contrast even the meanest labor at the meanest wages."(p.3) Those who are on welfare are those who are deemed "unemployable" or the "deserving poor" - the aged, the infirm and the insane - a group with which no healthy person would want to be associated.

The persistence of a permanent core of unemployables who form a latter day pauper class led some sociologists in the 1950s and 60s to distinguish a "culture of poverty". It is believed that whatever it takes to achieve success in our competitive, industrial society is not present in the cultural patterns of behaviour and values of the poor, although the poor do have their own charm. Herbert Gans (1970) questioned the notion of a "culture of poverty" which he deemed merely patterns of behaviour which had been developed as situational responses to lack of money. It is his contention that those patterns (which sociologists and anthropologists have termed culture) would disappear if the poor were given money. That we do not try this and see if it works, suggests Gans, means other dominant values are at stake.

In a 1972 essay, Gans attempts to situate the dominant values in a discussion of "The Positive Functions of Poverty" in which he lists 15 reasons why the poor are important to the affluent. Although somewhat satirically written, some of the issues raised are pertinent to this thesis, in particular, the poor:

"9) by being denied educational opportunities or being stereotyped as stupid and 'unteachable', the poor thus enable others to obtain better jobs."(p.281)

"13) being powerless, can be made to absorb the economic and political costs of change and growth in American society."(p.283)

It is not only that the poor have these functions, but that they come to believe that they are the sole agents of their own failures (in education; to get jobs) which is critical to the maintenance of the functions of poverty outlined by Gans. That the locus of control in regards to work be situated within the individual is important for all individuals, employed or not. In discussing the employment of individuals in the competitive segment of the labour market, a segment characterized by low wages and generally demeaning work, Carnoy (1980) asserts:

> Because of the generally undesirable working conditions in the competitive segment and because

> of the "low station" of those jobs, it is important for social stability that workers in the segment see this situation in individual rather than structural terms. That is, they must locate the reason for this restricted set of employment opportunities in individual lack of ability or bad luck rather than "blame the system."
> (p.53)

Because paid work encompasses the experience of a majority of Canadians, the socializing force of moving from unemployment to employment is a powerful one. In a study of the attributions made by employed and unemployed school leavers as to the causes of unemployment, Gurney (1981) found that the unemployed tend to make more external attributions about their unemployment, e.g. the economy, technology, prejudice, than did the employed. However, as the unemployed found jobs, the changes became pronounced and they attributed their own success to internal factors - motivation, confidence - and the lack of success of their unemployed colleagues to the converse of those internal factors.

In addition, in a study of attitudes toward the unemployed receiving social security benefits, Adrien Furnham (1982) found that the people who explained poverty or unemployment in individualistic terms were more negative in their attitude to the unemployed collecting benefits.

This attitude is not without historical precedent. James Struthers in No Fault of Their Own (1983) traces the development of the Canadian welfare state from the Depression to World War II. The individualistic attribution of poverty and unemployment, according to Struthers, is part of an historical attitude towards the poor and unemployed which originated in the Poor Law Report of 1834 in England.

The British government at the time believed that earlier laws which guaranteed the indigent relief were, in effect, providing a "massive subsidy for idleness". (p.6) The Report was an attempt at a deterrent doctrine of relief by which the poor and unemployed would be treated under the principle of "less eligibility"' i.e. the condition of relief to paupers was intended to ensure that their situation would not be made the same or better than the worst paid labourer, hence, labourers would have no inducement to enter the pauper class. "The Act of 1834... was perhaps the most sustained attempt to impose an ideological dogma, in defiance of the evidence of human need, in English history." (Thompson, 1963:295) In other words, the goal of the new laws "...was not to relieve the need of the indigent but to preserve the motivation of those who worked, particularly of those in the worst jobs a society had to offer". (Struthers, 1983: 7)

This doctrine of relief and the principle of "less eligibility" were, argues Struthers, transfered to Canada where they formed the basis of governmental relief policies until World War I. In Canada, during the period between

World War I and World War II, particularly during the Depression, successive Federal governments were called upon to respond to the massive unemployment in the nation. The National Employment Commission (NEC) was established under the King government in 1936 as a temporary measure to deal with the crisis:

> By February 1937, the NEC had developed a coherent approach to the Depression. It was based on two assumptions, both of which were only partially correct. The first claimed that recovery was proceeding naturally. The second saw that this improvement was by-passing those on relief because they were not qualified for the jobs that were opening up.
>
> (Struthers, 1983: 164)

Therefore, rather than provide public employment which, it was believed, would destroy the work ethic, the NEC recommended the establishment of skills training programs. Struthers interprets this policy:

> By emphasizing "employability" rather than employment, however, the commission could reassert the traditional emphasis on the individual's personal responsibility for finding work while at the same time satisfy the widespread public demand for governement action to end unemployment. In this way the work ethic - essential to the proper functioning of a market economy - could be preserved in a time of mass unemployment...In addition, by stressing that it was the unemployed and not private enterprise which needed to be "rehabilitated" before recovery could proceed, the commission could counter the growing criticism of capitalism produced by the Depression.
>
> (p.169)

Even the introduction of unemployment insurance in the United States and Canada serves to perpetuate "...the same system and principles of distribution which led to the need for its intervention" (Bakke, 1940: 289). The inequities of job and income distribution are maintained in the system of scaled unemployment insurance benefits. In his longitudinal study of the effects of unemployment during the Depression, Bakke (1940) states:

> We have set up elaborate machinery presumably for the purpose of keeping workers from the experience of direct relief, and then have scaled down the benefits in proportion to the very irregularities and inadequacies of wages which provide the effective cause for their need to apply for relief.
>
> (p.287)

Provision of welfare, by contrast, was and is still subject to "means tests" and humiliating "work tests" which began in 1932. As Struthers observes:

> These practices, which grew up alongside direct relief in most Canadian cities, although degrading, caused relatively little protest as long as they were confined to the unskilled - a class generally believed to lack the Protestant virtues of self-reliance, thrift and sobriety.
>
> (p.74)

However, whether provided for by welfare, work relief or unemployment insurance, the treatment of the poor and unemployed has been and continues to be a means of enforcing work and the work ethic.

But enforcing work and the work ethic is not the same as being committed to full employment. Braverman (1974), using Marx' analysis of the reserve army of labour which the unemployed constitute, discusses the present reserve army as including the unemployed, those employed in temporary jobs, the involuntarily part-time employed, migrant workers and housewives (who form the reserve for female occupations). Braverman discusses the need for the industrial reserve army in the process of capital accumulation. He sees an increasing mass of unemployed or underemployed as necessary to keep down the potentially threatening wage demands of workers in general, and unions in particular.

But whatever the reason for the poor and unemployed in contemporary society, the social pathology caused by unemployment is not disputed, although the numbers are. Richard Deaton (1983) attempts to asses, using methods developed from the United States, the real unemployment rates in Canada rather than the officially reported ones. He finds that Canadian collection of official unemployment data excludes from determination those who have given up looking for jobs ("discouraged"), those in involuntary part-time work, students who would prefer a job, the disabled, Treaty indians and those in the Yukon and Northwest Territories. Deaton reports that with those taken into account, the official unemployment rate reported in 1982 of 11% was really 12.7% (a difference of 15.5%) and in 1983, when the reported rate was 13.9%, Deaton calculates a rate of 16.3%.

Not content with establishing the higher rates, Deaton goes on to estimate the social cost of unemployment in Canada in 1982. Using the methodology developed by Dr. Harvey Brenner of Johns Hopkins University and used by the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress, applied to Canadian data, Deaton's estimated social cost accounting found:

Socio-Economic Cost of Unemployment in Canada, 1982
($ Billion)

Item	Cost
Lost production	$41.0
Lost earnings	8.9
UI Benefit payments	8.1
Social costs:	
Related Stress indicators	7.4
Lost tax revenue to government	7.4
Lost training and education- (Depreciation of human capital	2.7
	$75.5

Socio-Economic Cost of Unemployment as a % of GNP = 22.0 per cent

(p.19)

Therefore, Deaton finds that "[t]he $76 Billion total cost of unemployment is equivalent to 22 percent of Gross National Product and is three times greater than the 1982-83 Federal deficit." (p.19)

While the objective realities of unemployment are staggering, the subjective realities have been taking their toll. Many studies have attempted to determine the social and psychological effects of unemployment on the unemployed themselves. A study of "The Social-Psychological Impact of Unemployment in Edmonton" conducted by Krahn, Lowe and

Tanner (1984) at the University of Alberta found the sense of despair, alienation and depression to be profound among unemployed youth.

Moreover, the effect of results such as these, while not new, continues to fuel concerns over the lack of attachment to the world of work and the consequent loss of the work ethic, particularly among unemployed youth. Recent concern has led to the provision of temporary youth employment programs in Canada, the United States and England. In a study of the impact of one such program in the U.K. on the employment prospects and psychological well-being of the participants, Stafford (1982) found that the mental health of the participants, which had previously been deteriorating, was helped by the program, but only while the participants were in the program. As for their employment prospects after the program, Stafford found that while improved, they only appeared to be improved because unemployment, in general, was not rising then. She predicted that if unemployment were to rise, the prospects of the participants would deteriorate. In addition, she found that the youths who participated in the program chose to participate despite the extremely low pay and low status of the jobs which they performed. This finding would appear to echo Bakke's claim that income, job and the activities of work are important "...as foundations for, not structure of, security". (p.304)

While it might be inferred from the results of the studies of Stafford; Bakke; and Krahn, Lowe and Tanner that employment, rather than short-term training programs would do more towards alleviating the psycho-social problems associated with unemployment (not to mention the economic ones), the continuing focus on provision of skills training suggests that more than economic values are involved. The continuance of manpower training programs is particularly interesting in light of Blaug's (1985) assertion that:

> The vast bulk of jobs in an industrial economy involve competences that are acquired on the job in a few weeks and require, not a given stock of knowledge of facts and concepts, but the capacity to learn by doing.
> (p. 20)

Moreover, as Gleeson (1984) argues in his examination of the massive manpower training program instituted for unemployed youth in the U.K., the purpose of the program is inherently conservative. He maintains that mass training "does little more than institutionalise youth unemployment as an inevitable consequence of market forces, and...[reinforces] popular opinion that at least some training is better than nothing" (p. 161) and that it is provided to "reconcile 'trainees' to the failures of contemporary political and economic policy" (p. 163); to "pre-set young people to think of themselves outside, rather than within the existing arrangements of society" (p. 161). Hence, it is appropriate at this point to discuss the various explanations and analyses of the relationship believed to exist between education and employment which inform the continuing provision of manpower training programs.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Determination of the relationship between education and employment has been particularly noticeable in analyses of youth unemployment and labour market participation rates. The results of two studies on youth unemployment (Denton, Robb, and Spencer: 1980, Sen:1982) in Canada demonstrate that while youth unemployment is high relative to unemployment in the rest of the labour force, education and unemployment are inversely related and higher educational levels are consistently correlated with higher labour force participation rates. However, using American data which demonstrate the higher levels of unemployment, lower social status and lower levels of earnings among high school drop-outs, Gray, Rutter and Smith (1980) query whether the worse occupational outcomes are a consequence of drop-out per se rather than the personal characteristics and social backgrounds of those individuals who fail to complete high school:

> The findings showed that there _were_ [authors' emphasis] school effects on employment insofar as schooling influenced attendance, school dropout, examination success and continuation of schooling into the sixth year. But there were no consistent school effects on employment which did not operate

> through these mechanisms. The findings are consistent with a view of development which supposes that environmental experiences may exert a very important influence, but also that very few experiences have long-term effects which are independent of intervening circumstances.[Rutter, 1975,1979] In other words, schooling does have effects on employment because its immediate results set in motion a train of events which has persistent sequelae.
>
> (p.368-69)

As argued above, the effects of remaining in or dropping out of school have greater consequences than simply the greater or lesser acquisition of cognitive skills. While the socializing effects of schooling are by no means a recent addition to theory, having informed virtually all pedagogical theory and having occupied sociologists since Durkheim (in Karabel and Halsey, 1977) and later, Parsons (1959), the dominant ideological position regarding the effects has been the positive and homogeneous nature of the effects. However, there has been a growing criticism of the "invisible pedagogy" of schooling (Bernstein, 1971; Bourdieu, 1973; Karabel, 1972). The "invisible pedagogy" or "hidden curriculum" which these and other authors identify and analyze are the non-explicit ways in which schools transmit and reproduce class differences. The uses of "objective" testing, the types of knowledge taught to different groups of students, the weakness or strength of authority relationships imposed on students, "streaming" into academic or vocational programs: all are means by which the illusion of equality of educational opportunity remains just that - an illusion. One of the most comprehensive analyses is to be found in Bowles and Gintis' Schooling in Capitalist America (1976). Central to their argument is the notion that the value of education in increasing the incomes and employment opportunities of those who complete school is not a function of the acquisition of cognitive capacities, but rather, the development of non-cognitive personality traits such as docility and punctuality. Bowles and Gintis maintain that schooling, operating in a capitalist society, functions to provide workers with the appropriate values and behaviours for the hierarchical division of labour which they will confront upon leaving school. When describing the influence of employers and other social elites on schools, they argue that:

> [T]hey have sought to use the schools for the reproduction of possible types of worker consciousness and behaviour through a correspondence between the social relations of education and those of economic life.
> (p. 101)

Blaug (1985) supports their assertion:

> The frequently repeated research finding that few workers ever make specific use of the cognitive knowledge acquired in schools [Gintis, 1971] indicates, not some sort of monstrous mismatch between education and work, but the pivotal role of affective behavioural traits in job performance.
> (p. 19)

This is not to suggest, however, that the types of behaviours which the school rewards are the same for all students. Part of the correspondence which Bowles and Gintis describe is the development of behaviours appropriate to that level of the occupational hierarchy in which the students will find themselves after the schools have "sorted" them. Hence, the values appropriate to managerial positions like leadership, self-reliance, and self-esteem are different from the ones rewarded in those students who are being prepared for lower level occupations - passivity, docility and obedience to authority. Moreover, as Rist (1977) argues, schools have a number of methods of control available to ensure that conformity to the rules is enforced; methods which can be overt (expulsion) or more subtle and covert, such as "labelling". He maintains that when students do not conform appropriately to the behaviours expected of them, they are labelled "deviants" or "behavioural problems"; labels which persist and in fact, increase the likelihood of further labelling until the student withdraws from the system, hence becoming a drop-out and another example of the "self-fulfilling prophecy". Burton Clark (1960), in his work on the open door college, demonstrates how this process is replicated to some degree, though in a slightly different form, through the vocational/guidance counselling functions of the junior college. Clark asserts that the counselling, which is a critical aspect of the junior college, is the means by which the students' culturally-induced hopes for mobility are reconciled with their eventual destinations, thus transforming structurally induced failure into individual failure. Those students who exhibit the appropriate (to the counsellors) values and behaviours such as "motivation" and "realistic aspirations" are rewarded and supported in their attempts to complete, those who do not exhibit the appropriate behaviours are "cooled out", a process of counselling the students to the point at which they terminate their studies "voluntarily".

Therefore, while the call in recent times has been for increasing the cognitive skills of literacy and numeracy to fit the demands of an increasingly technologically sophisticated economy (discussed in Chapter I), Blaug sees this belief as "productive of a whole series of misdirected educational reforms...[M]ost employers, whether public or private, care less about what potential workers know than about how they will behave." (p. 19)

Moreover, Bowles and Gintis assert, the differential system of reward in schools, offered as an "ostensibly meritocratic and rational mechanism for allocating individuals to economic positions" (p. 101), serves to legitimate the inequality of the economic structure of capitalist society. In addition, Blaug suggests that the legitimizing function of schooling is economically efficient to employers because it obviates the inherent conflict of interest between workers and employers. Therefore, according to Bowles and Gintis, the difference individuals develop in their aspirations and self-images, dependent upon the educational level they have attained, make them "correspondingly valuable to employers interested in preserving and reproducing the status differences on which the legitimacy and stability of the hierarchical division of labour is based" (p. 140-41).

This is not to deny, as Blaug argues, that schooling might actually contribute to increasing the productivity of individuals, "...but it would matter little if it were not so provided everyone thought it was so - which, of course, they do" (p. 25). The virtual universality of the the belief to which Blaug refers, is critical for the continued legitimacy of the present economic structure, because, as Hunter (1981) states, in a society which considers itself to be meritocratic, "[i]f members of such a society come to feel that merit is too often not properly rewarded,...some criticism of the system of distributive inequality will result" (p. 169). To vitiate such criticism in times of high or increasing unemployment and persistent poverty, governments can intervene to increase the numbers of opportunities or "chances" for the poor and unemployed to change their situation to one of employment. But the deeply entrenched and widely held belief to which Blaug refers - that education is one, if not the only, route to employment -

is a relatively recent notion. Its remarkable tenacity, despite criticism and growing evidence to the contrary, continues to inform policies and programs formulated in Canada to respond to high unemployment and the undiminished existence of poverty. The paradigmatic economic encodification of that notion is human capital theory, a discussion of which follows.

HUMAN CAPITAL

The technological changes brought about by World War II, the economic prosperity after the war and the return of enormous numbers of demobilized veterans to the United States and Canada necessitated the development of large-scale peacetime human resource planning, not only to absorb the large numbers of veterans into the economy, but to reabsorb them into a changing industrial structure. While there was an overall increase in prosperity, persistent inequities in the distribution of income still puzzled many social scientists in North America. Prominent among those was Theodore W. Schultz, an individual whose name is virtually synonomous with human capital theory (HCT) from orthodox economics.

A classical formulation of the theory can be found in Schultz' presidential address to the Annual Meeting of the American Economic Associaltion in December, 1960. The substance of Schultz' reasoning is that education is both a form of consumption and a form of investment. His argument is intended to demonstrate that the observed increase in national output and real earnings per worker in the United States could not be entirely accounted for by increased investment in land, labour and physical capital. Therefore, he reasoned, there must be a qualitative change in the inputs of the workforce which would explain the increased productivity of which the rise in earnings is an indication. The changes in the workforce, argues Schultz, are due to:

> ...such quality components as skill, knowledge and similar attributes that affect particular human capabilities to do productive work. Insofar a expenditures to enhance such capabilities also increases the value productivity of human effort (labor), they will yield a positive rate of return.
>
> (1961:8)

Hence, as Schultz demonstrates, as does Mincer (1982) in a more recent discussion, one of the central tenets of human capital theorists, observed but almost totally ignored by earlier classical economists, was the notion of a skill dimension to labour supply; a dimension amenable to individual and social choices which could influence not only its quantity, but its quality as well. Therefore, the conception of capital, previously restricted for the most part to physical capital, was enlarged to include human capital, in the form of education, skills, and capacities, as well. And because the activities of acquiring these skills and capacities involve costs and benefits, they could be analyzed as both private and public economic decisions.

The focus, in HCT, on the individual, rather than the market, as the central unit of analysis, indicates a major shift from earlier economic thought. The notion of individual choice allowed for explanations of inconsistent economic growth data, not accounted for by classical economics. Because HCT analysis deals with capacities which can be acquired, both formally and informally, the activity then, for human capital theorists, was to examine the relationship identified by Schultz and others to determine the dimensions of the qualitative changes described.

One of the primary ways in which the relationship was examined was through the use of regression models. Perhaps the most characteristic of these studies is that carried out by E.F.Denison, whose work, _Accounting for United States Economic Growth 1929-69_ (1974), concerns itself with mathematically modelling the relationship as calculations of rates of return at the national level using human capital as a factor of production. The results of Denison's study served to support the notion that the production and consumption benefits which accrued to the individual and the society from investment in the acquisition of human capital outweighed the costs of obtaining or providing the education and training necessary. Therefore, as Wright (1979) argues:

> In terms of human capital investments, the decisive choice is over allocating one's time toward obtaining income in the present, thus maximizing present consumption, or allocating one's time toward obtaining skills in the present, thus maximizing future consumption.
> (p.68)

While earlier human capital theorists concerned themselves with attempting to account for the unequal ditribution of wages, suggesting that workers were paid differentially based on their different stocks of human capital, later elaborations on the benefits which accrued to the investment in human capital have argued, as does Mincer:

> ...that relevant concepts of costs and benefits are real, that is, not restricted to pecuniary terms. Education itself may be attractive and may enhance future enjoyment of life, apart from monetary gain."
> (p. 196)

The non-pecuniary benefits, concern with which has informed recent educational research, have been demonstrated to include such things as, among others, better health, lower fertility rates, increases in live births and improvement in childcare. Therefore, it is argued, the qualitative differences in the lives of those who have greater incomes when compared to those who are considered to be poor, can be attributed to the greater investment of the former in the acquisition of human capital. Hence, the focus of human capital theorists on the exercise of choice, so that:

> The determination of individual earnings and of the distribution of earnings are therefore seen as the result of rational individual choices - on skill acquisition, on family labour force supply, and on "investment" in children.
> (Osberg, 1981: 120)

While HCT has served to offer a possible explanation of existing inequities in the distribution of income, contained within it are also possible means by which intervention, in the form of government-sponsored training programs and increased educational opportunities, might alter those inequities for individuals and increase productivity in and for the society as a whole. Certainly, it has been this reasoning which informed the enormous growth in increased provision of primary and secondary education in Third World countries in the 1960's and early 70's, as well as the fight for equality of educational opportunity of the civil rights movement of the United States. As Blaug ironically states in "Where are we now in the economics of education?" (1985), "Those were, in short, the 'golden years' of the economics of education when no self-respecting Minister of Education would have dreamed of making educational decisions without an economist sitting at his right hand." (p.17)

However, despite the possible flaws which can be now seen thanks to hindsight, prominent among the early rationalizations for the development of HCT was the abolition of poverty. Therefore, in terms of HCT, all individuals can be considered "capitalists"; their investment in the acquisition of skills and knowledge is an individually and socially productive one, by which they "own" economically valuable capacities, if nothing else. HCT can thereby be seen as a subset of the market ideology of capitalism, two assumptions of this ideology being paramount in HCT:

1. The economic system is an open one and,
2. Economic success is a matter of individual merit.

Therefore, any inequality in the distribution of income is due to the differences in worker characteristics. Hence, HCT is a contemporary reformulation of the notions of individual responsibility for employment and unemployment which will be discussed in detail later.

While HCT became the dominant economic theory on which increases in educational spending were predicated, anomalies found in empirical studies of the rates of return to education for various minority groups in the United States have led to some modifications of HCT by institutional economists. In particular, two models - "signalling" and "job competition" - are an attempt to offer an explanation of the anomalies found. Michael

Spence (1973) outlines a conceptual framework for signalling,

> ...within which the signalling power of education, job experience, race, sex and a host of other observable personal characteristics can be determined.
> (p.355)

Spence reasons that education and training play no part, per se, in increasing individual worker productivity, but rather, function as a signal to the employer:

> In most job markets the employer is not sure of the productive capabilities of an individual at the time he hires him...The fact that it takes time to learn an individual's productive capabilities means that hiring is an investment decision. The fact that these capabilities are not known beforehand makes the decision one under uncertainty.
> (p.355)

According to Spence, the employer bases his or her decision on two observable types of characteristics: 1) indices which are unalterable (such as race and gender) and, 2) signals which are subject to manipulation. Because signals are alterable, individuals seeking employment incur signalling costs which they hope are negatively correlated with productivity because if education is too productive relative to the costs, everyone will invest heavily in education and it will cease to have a signalling function. Education however, is not the only characteristic which functions as a signal: it is the type of job, according to Spence, which determines which characteristics function as signals. More likely the characteristics which will function as signals are determined by the employer.

An even more institutionally-oriented model is the job competition model proposed by Lester Thurow (1972). Labour supply plays little role in Thurow's model, rather, the:

> ...labor market is characterized less by wage competition than by job competition (author's emphasis). That is to say, instead of people looking for jobs, there are jobs looking for people - for "suitable" people. In a market based on job competition, the function of education is not to confer skill and therefore increased productivity and higher wages on the worker; it is rather to certify his "trainability" and to confer upon him a certain status by virtue of this certification. Jobs and higher incomes are then distributed on the basis of this certified status. (p.68)

Thurow argues that individuals' income is based on their relative position in the labour queue and the distribution of job opportunities in the economy. Hence, productivity and skills do not exist in the labour market, but are characteristics of jobs. Therefore, it is "... the demand for job skills which creates the supply of job skills." (p.72) This model, however, is not without problems as Thurow acknowledges:

> As the supply of educated labor increases, individuals find that they must improve their educational level simply to defend their current income positions...In effect, education becomes a defensive expenditure necessary to protect one's "market share." (emphasis Thurow's) (p.79)

However, as Christopher Jencks argues in Inequality (1972), neither family background, schooling nor cognitive skill explains much of the enormous variation in men's incomes. They might explain some of the variation in men's competence, but even competence Jencks demonstrates, doesn't explain the variation in income. While orthodox economists look to individual worker characteristics to explain income and employment differences, Barry Bluestone (1977) suggests:

> What economists overlook is the glaring fact that the economy does not create enough good jobs and that consequently many people with adequate skills are denied adequate employment...The basic structure of the economy is such that it creates good jobs and bad ones and then parcels them out on the basis of race, sex, and luck.
> (p.335)

In fact, there is another growing concern regarding the relationship between education and employment: the increasing overeducation of the labour market. Rumberger (1981, 1984), supporting Bluestone's contention that the problem is one of few good jobs rather than few skills, calls attention to the growing imbalance between education and work. As increasing numbers of people attain higher levels of education, particularly college degrees, and yet the jobs available to them actually require few skills to perform, Rumberger sees possible unanticipated consequences: rather than a more productive labour force, he envisions the converse. The implications of overeducation for workers Rumberger suggests, might be decreased job satisfaction, consequently attitudes and performance may suffer. If attitudes suffer and expectations are unfulfilled regarding relative economic position, there might be higher turnover, absenteeism, problems with health and the possibility of increased strike activity. However, Rumberger cautions that the relationship between the educational system and the production system is not just one of contradiction, but of correspondence as well:

> First, an overeducated work force (in terms of overqualified workers) may reflect part of a reserve army of labor. A reserve army of labor serves two functions. It constitutes a ready supply of labor that can be drawn into the active work force as needed, such as during times of expansionary activity, and it serves as a means of controlling the active work force by putting downward pressure on wages - thereby increasing capitalists' surplus and giving capitalist employers the power of threatened dismissal. The oversupply of skilled workers in the labor force may have functional importance in the capitalist system.
>
> (1981: 36)

While the rise in educational attainment may have functional importance to the employer in the system, it also has functional importance to the individual holding the academic credentials. As Ivar Berg notes in Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery (1970):

> Educational credentials have become the new property in America. Our nation, which has attempted to make the transmission of real and personal property difficult, has contrived to replace it with an inheritable set of values concerning degrees and diplomas which will most

> certainly reinforce the formidable class barriers that remain, even without the right within families to pass benefices from parents to their children.
>
> (p.185)

Collins, in The Credential Society (1979) argues that in the increasing levels of credentialism...

> ...we see the economic implications of our educational system - not because of the technical skills that it might provide, but rather as a counterbalance to excess industrial capacity.
>
> (p.194)

In other words, Collins sees the provision of further schooling as a way to remove from the labour market for a time, those who would be unemployed and underemployed.

> Nevertheless, given the evidence that job skills of all sorts are actually acquired in the work situation rather than in a formal training institution, it is apparent that the technical training rhetoric is a response to the crisis of the credential market rather than a substantively significant change in educational content. New types of credentials are proposed because the public has lost confidence in the value of the old types.
>
> (Collins, 1979:193)

From the point of view of the worker, as mentioned previously, increasing credentialism can lead to underemployment or sub-employment. Gerald Glyde (1977) considers individuals to be sub-employed if they are discouraged in attempts to find a job, working part-time involuntarily or are the full-time working poor. While underemployment from the employers' point of view may be more cost-effective, the effects on workers, both financially and emotionally, are devastating. This holds true not only for college graduates but for any individual employed in any occupation in which their education plays little role:

> The substantial literature on the economics of discrimination provides numerous examples that rates of return on human capital are less for minority workers than for the majority group (white males). These results are clearly indicative of underemployment.
> (Glyde, 1977:255)

SEGMENTATION ANALYSIS - ECONOMIC AND SOCIOLOGICAL

The persistence of low wages, returns to education and high unemployment affects not only minorities, but other groups as well: women, youth and the poor. While human capital theorists assume a relatively unbroken continuum of wages and wage levels throughout the workforce, there have been challenges to that assumption. The increased attention paid by orthodox economists to the modifications by Spence and Thurow to human capital theory has shifted the attention of the human capital theorists from the supply to the demand side of the market. However, the fundamental notion of the market is still its homogeneity and openness. Recently, this notion has been criticized by a branch of economics and sociology known as segmentation theory, which is an attempt to provide an alternative to:

> ...the orthodox views of the work world in which is implicit the tendency to see workers' behaviour as voluntary where individuals freely make various choices about their work careers, moving, training and earning in response to opportunities in an open labour market.
> (Butler and Smith, 1983:396)

In contrast, segmentation analysis implies:

> ...that the labour market is fragmented into persisting groups, identifiable by rather permanent group characteristics. Those who fall into one or another of these groups have different patterns of work-life which emerge not from individual choice or individualized employer evaluation but largely from the structure of the labour market for particular sets of jobs.
> (Carnoy, 1980:31)

Therefore, a segmentation model emphasizes work settings and their characteristics rather than factors at the individual worker level. Based on the seminal formulations of Piore (1973) and others who documented the existence of a dual labour market (as evidenced by the bimodal pattern of income distribution in North America), recent work in Canada and the United States by Gordon, Reich and Edwards (1973) and Butler and Smith (1983) has been concerned with demonstrating empirically the existence of distinct segments in the labour market which can be classified according to particular attributes of the working conditions, wages and other clusters of characteristics.

A variety of terms of classification have been established although the differences are semantic rather than substantive. Primarily, the models of labour market segmentation relay on the characteristics of occupations (Piore, 1973) and/or industries (Bluestone, et al., 1973) in order to identify the segments.

> Segmentation analysis argues that a significant part of the differences in wages paid to different

> groups in society is a function of the structure of production; i.e. who controls the means of production and for what purposes production is used. (emphasis Carnoy's)
>
> (Carnoy, 1980:112)

Because studies of labour market segmentation are intended to offer structural explanations for income differences, recent empirical research into segmentation has focused on the relationship between gender, ethnicity and income as a function of segment location. (Boyd and Humphreys, 1979; Butler and Smith, 1983; Carnoy, 1980; Krahn, 1983; Phillips and Phillips, 1983))

But how are the characteristics of segments created? Does the high unemployment of certain segments create the characteristics of those segments or have certain segments been "chosen" by the capitalist class in which to concentrate unemployment? Carnoy suggests that:

> Clearly, it is more acceptable to a society run by middle-aged men to have unemployment concentrated in young people, women and minority groups...From a policy standpoint, then, giving more education to these groups will not raise employability, according to segmentation theory, because it is the nature of the labour market and capitalist control of that market which determine the level of unemployment and those who are more susceptible to being unemployed.
>
> (1980:112)

While Carnoy is attempting to offer some explanation for the existence and persistence of segments, the primary criticism levelled at sementation analysis is its lack of explanatory power. Gunderson (1980) argues that segmentation analysis fails...

> ...to explain how the barriers between the primary and secondary labour markets can persist in the

> long run against competitive forces. Why can't workers move, in the long run, from the secondary to the primary labour market, and why don't employers recruit in the secondary labour market knowing that they could obtain abundant labour at low wages? It is not enough to describe the barriers: it is also necessary to explain why they exist and how they can persist over time.
> (p.193)

Hunter (1981) and Osberg (1981) both concur in this criticism, Hunter suggesting that the principal reason for the limited utility of the present formulations of segmentation analysis "...seems to lie in the fact that it is largely atheoretical and descriptive. Moreover, it is plagued by some persistent problems of definition." (p. 181) Many of the critics agree, however, that segmentation analysis is a relatively new field and that the flaws might be overcome in the future.

Despite the criticisms, the question has not been whether the segments exist, the elaborate descriptive studies confirm their existence. Hence, analysis of labour market segmentation does have some policy implications. Gunderson argues that:

> Concerns for issues of public policy arise from the segmented labour market analysis for reasons of both distributive equity and allocative efficiency. Equity concerns arise because workers trapped in the secondary labour market tend to be disadvantaged workers, often caught in a viscious circle of poverty, and experiencing other problems associated with discrimination and poor working conditions. Efficiency concerns arise because of the costs associated with immobility of labour and the barriers to entry.
> (p. 190-91)

Given these concerns, the decriptive ability of segmentation analysis and a discussion of the classifications of the segments is of use, albeit limited, to the argument presented in this study.

Classification of Segments

By Industry - Using the classifications of segmentation by industry and occupation developed by Carnoy (1980) and Edwards (1979), industry is largely divided into two segments: competitive and monopoly, each determined by using the variable of the Average Market Power (AMP) of the largest firms within each industry category with which to determine the relative concentration of firms withing each industry. In some Canadian research (Boyd and Humphreys, 1979; Krahn, 1983), the competitive segment (AMP less than 40%) is called the periphery and the monopoly segment (AMP is greater than 40%) is known as the core: These terms are perhaps more descriptive of the relationship between the segments and will be the terms used in further discussion.

By Occupation - The classification of occupational segments was determined by Carnoy using certain characteristics of jobs such as "specific vocational preparation" and "relationship to people" from the classifications in the U.S. Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT). Because of the similarity of DOT to the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations (CCDO), codings from which are used in the statistical analysis later, the occupational classifications developed by Carnoy will be used here.

The division of the occupational sector into occupational segments give an indication of the conditions of work experienced by those employed in each segment. Carnoy has determined that there are four segments: Primary Independent, Primary Subordinate, Secondary and Crafts. The first three are the ones with which we will be concerned, as the fourth, Crafts, represents a group of jobs which are representative of an older industrial order and are, at present, fast-dwindling.

Occupational Segments

Primary Independent - This segment is characterized by stable employment, relative job security, established patterns of career progression and relatively high pay. It is different from the Primary Subordinate segment in that the jobs in this segment involve general rather than firm-specific skills. The jobs are not centred on operating machines and typically the skills are obtained in advanced or professional schooling. The jobs are likely to have occupational or professional standards for performance and are likely to require independent unit- or self-pacing.

Edwards subsumes crafts under this segment and thereby distinguishes three groups which dominate the segment:

1) the middle layers of a firm's employment

structure - long-term clerical, sales and technical staff; foremen; bookkeepers; personal secretaries; supervisors

2) those ocupations that grow out of craft work - electricians; plumbers; steam-fitters; machinists

3) professional positions - accountants; research scientists; engineers; registered nurses; doctors; lawyers

A greater role is played by the public sector in this segment: Edwards estimates one-fifth to one-third of all Primary Independent employment is in the public sector.

There are large returns to education (college), age and experience in this segment and switching jobs generally means advancement, though this is not true for craft workers.

Primary Subordinate - This is the largest group, characterized by production jobs - assembling, etc.; low-level unionized sales, clerical and administrative. It also includes production-type jobs in core firms: bus drivers; aircraft maintenance workers; warehouseman. Often, Primary Subordinate jobs can be characterized as helping or serving, but some education is required for them, as for barbers; mechanics; health technicians.

This segment is generally distinguished by unions and the jobs are permanent rather than temporary (as in the secondary segment). What distinguishes these jobs from the category of Primary Independent is that "... the work tasks are repetitive, routinized and subject to machine pacing." (Edwards, 1972: 184-5)

There are more substantial returns (than in the Secondary segment) to age, experience and at least high school education: the path to advancement is generally seniority. On the other hand, too much education can be a liability in this segment as a high level of education:

> ...is likely to render the work even more stultifying and boring than otherwise, and is likely to be associated with greater ambition for upward mobility and experience than the fixed seniority system in this segment can accomodate.
> (Carnoy, 1980: 52)

Secondary Segment - The Secondary segment is characterized by manual labour and service jobs for which training is largely on-the-job. In this segment, labour power...

> ...comes closest to being treated simply as a commodity, unfettered and unencumbered by any job structure, union or other institutional restraints.
> (Edwards, 1979: 183)

Some occupations which are characteristic of this segment are farm labourers; parking lot attendants; janitors; and low-level clerical positions. These jobs are generally dead-end, high turnover, no reward for seniority (the age-wage profile is flat), not much education required, and small or no return to education. Characterizing the employers in this segment, Edwards contends that:

> Secondary employers generally do not have the scale, the volume of profits, or the stability to make long-term commitments necessary to establish primary market employment. For example, guarantees of employment security and benefits and privileges rising with seniority typically require contractual obligations extending considerably into the future.
> (1977: 183)

While the characterizations of the various segments are descriptive, what is of primary concern in this study, as previously stated, is not that the segments exist, but whether increased investment in training and education can effect inter-segment mobility and hence, income distribution, as human capital theory (the basis on which programs are provided) would suggest. Because despite the unequal distribution of income throughout the occupational structure, it is characteristic of the ethos of North American society that the inequality is not intergenerationally maintained: that successive generations in society have a chance to better themselves in the occupational order.

However, in a comparative study of occupational mobility in Canada and the United States (McRoberts and Selbee, 1981), the authors found no significant trend in either exchange or circulation mobility between the countries over a number of generations. What intergenerational mobility does exist is generally associated with the historical transformation of certain types and levels of occupations formerly considered unskilled to the relatively recent category of semi-skilled.

This transformation is explained by Braverman in Labor and Monopoly Capital (1974) as due to the overall increase in levels of schooling in the population, rather than changes in the conditions of work. Moreover, he argues, the fact that "white collar" work is viewed as higher in status than "blue collar" work is an historical artifact which is belied at present by the similarities in the objective conditions of the white collar world of low level clerical and service work and most traditionally blue collar employment.

Based on research in the United States, Carnoy concludes that the movement between industrial and occupational segments is extremely restricted:

> This means that the characteristics of the particular labour market in which people are located heavily influence the reward level and reward structure which people will most probably face throughout their working careers. In some cases, such as the secondary market, this structure results in very low returns to more schooling and increased time in the labour force; in primary independent jobs, the opposite is true. As long as people work in the secondary market...increasing their education and training can raise their incomes only if additional investment moves them out of secondary jobs into higher-paying ones.
>
> (1980: 75)

However, despite the apparent inability of manpower training programs alone to aid individuals in moving from the secondary jobs into primary jobs, Ginzberg (1980) maintains that the programs do have some effect on equalizing income distribution, stating that:

> ...the distribution of earnings is more equal now than it would have been without these programs. As they have grown in size, they have become a significant source of direct redistribution. As a mechanism for indirectly altering market earnings by changing skills and relative wages, they fail.

> They are working in an underemployed economy where they cannot cause the desired changes.
> (p. 109)

The effects of the redistribution are not long-term; they exist for participants only while they are in the programs. The long-term effects on poverty of government-sponsored training programs will not, according to Borus (1980), reduce the numbers of people in poverty. He asserts that "[t]he investments in training are marginal and the increments in earnings likewise tend to be marginal." (p. 38)

However, despite evidence to the contrary, many governments, including Alberta, continue to maintain or expand existing skills training and wage subsidy programs. In Alberta, as revenues began to decline, the expansion of programs has not been in proportion to the demand for programs, thereby limiting even the direct redistribution effect found by Ginzberg. The policy choice to increase training and focus only on the supply of labour as a response to increasing unemployment is rooted in human capital theory. Janet Johnston, in Richardson and Henning, comments on skills training as a response to unemployment:

> No matter what the target group, however, a key ingredient in the success of any skill training taught in a classroom setting is the identification of skills in high demand or for which there are actual shortages, so that the participants can reasonably expect to find jobs following successful completion of training.
> (p.92)

Moreover, Carnoy argues that policies which focus on training as a solution to unemployment cannot be effective unless they are accompanied by...

> ...an employment policy which not only creates more jobs (through taxation and other incentive policies as well as direct state employment), but also creates more "primary" jobs, or changes the condition of employment and pay in the secondary market, in part through an incomes policy which equalizes earnings among workers by raising lower incomes relative to higher.
> (p.113)

However, the fact that Carnoy's suggestions (or ones which are similar) are not acted upon would suggest that they challenge certain assumptions held by those in power. The kind of choice made by Alberta Manpower is seen by Richardson and Henning as a defensive choice:

> A more offensive style of response has, of course, been inhibited by a set of commonly shared assumptions about what might be "possible"...One fairly common assumption is that there is a constraint on a significant increase in the number of public sector jobs that can or should be created. This would probably be the easiest and quickest way to reduce unemployment levels, but there is a conventional wisdom that this is either unacceptable, because it would require higher levels of taxation, or it would be damaging to long-run employment prospects, even if voters would tolerate higher levels of taxation.
> (p.311)

The notion that a policy response is "defensive" begs the question: what is being defended? As discussed earlier, what is being defended are particular beliefs about work, the work ethic and individual responsibility for unemployment. This is evident in the justifications given for the constriction of welfare provision: that motivation to work and economic security are considered to be inversely related when discussing solutions to unemployment. However, Bakke demonstrated that the opposite conclusion seems justified, that "...the degree of ambition is likely to be directly proportional to the degree of economic security." (p.279)

Moreover, Timothy Weaver, in The Contest For Educational Resources (1982), contends that even were there to be an increase in the numbers of jobs available, the additional investment in training and academic upgrading would, in all likelihood, not change the situation for the poor and unemployed with low levels of education significantly. Weaver uses a systems dynamics model developed for examining and analyzing educational policy initiatives. All policies he investigates are examined in terms of their short-term and longer-term impact on the gap in educational attainment. He found that the increases in funding for programs designed to raise the achievement levels of disadvantaged learners were offset by the additional increases in funding for more advantaged learners because of the reallocation of public resources to perceived erosions of relative advantage. Alternatively, Weaver found, if resources are not reallocated proportionately to programs at the higher educational levels because the resources are diminishing overall, then in order to maintain the educational attainment gap, standards rise. These findings by Weaver are particularly germane to the situation in Alberta at the time research for this study was initiated as grade levels for entry into skills training programs at NAIT, SAIT, and the AVCs had just been changed.

As standards for entry into skills training and academic upgrading programs rise while resource allocation remains the same or diminishes and demand by individuals for those programs increases, the need to justify the exclusion of particular groups becomes more pressing: there just isn't room for all. It is at times like this that the individualistic explanations for unemployment and poverty become more pronounced among those who are the gatekeepers. The institutionalization and professionalization of social services appears only to have altered the focus of the blame. As Piven and Cloward argue:

> Where philanthropic doctrine traced the cause of poverty to moral defects, casework doctrine traces it to psychological defects. The older philanthropic treatment consisted of a strict regimen of individual surveillance and discipline, the contention being that poverty proved the existence of moral weakness; casework prescribes modern procedures of psychosocial diagnosis, "individualization", and counselling, as if by being poor, the client proves his personality weakness and his need for professional treatment. (p.177)

If Piven and Cloward's argument is correct, then the reported procedures by institutional gatekeepers for application and determination of suitability for entry into training institutions ought to reflect notions about individual responsibility, in particular, attributions about the nature of the poor and unemployed discussed above. The conception of unemployment as an individualistic phenomenon would, based on the literature discussed, in particular the work of Bowles and Gintis (1976), include particular attributions about:

1)Self-reliance - the notion that an individual is not self-reliant if he or she is dependent upon public funds is a common assumption. Often, programs are offered to help individuals "get off" social assistance and UIC, which are seen as sources of dependency. However, as Bakke suggests,

> Whether one calls this "self-reliance" or not will depend on how insistent he is that energy and initiative applied to increasing the plane of living furnished by public funds cannot be self-reliance.
>
> (p.276)

2)Motivation - Appropriate motivations for returning to school would likely be defined as intrinsic (to better oneself or choose a career) rather than extrinsic (to get a training allowance or to get a job). Willis suggests, however, from the point of view of the student...

> ...particular job choice does not matter much...Indeed we may see that with respect to the

> criteria...most manual and semi-skilled jobs are the same...[W]ork as a matter of particular job choice - this is, in essence, a very middle class construct..."the lads" are not choosing careers or particular jobs, they are committing themselves to a future of generalised labour. Most work...is equilibrated by the overwhelming need for instant money...
>
> (p.99-100)

Hence, the potential conflict between counsellors and students: it would seem, particularly for students living under conditions of extreme economic hardship, that while the students' motivation for entering a program may be the training allowance they will receive (which becomes another form of transfer payment), the counsellors might regard any expression of this motivation as innappropriate.

3)Right Attitude - The notion that with the "right attitude" one could get and keep a job assumes the opposite: if one did not get or keep a job, then one did not have the "right attitude". It is often assumed by educators that institutions provide structures under which students can develop the "right attitude". There are two parts to this assumption: one is that conformity will be well-rewarded in terms of future income, and the second is that behaviours learned in a school setting are transferable to the work environment. In fact, however, many people labour in low-paying jobs for their entire lives, and there are challenges to the assumption of transferability of behaviours, as was demonstrated earlier in the discussion of the findings of Gray, Smith and Rutter.

4) Occupational Goals and Aspirations - Applications for skills training under Alberta Manpower funded programs require the statement of an occupational goal by the student. Helping students choose an occupational goal preparatory to skills training is under the purview of vocational counsellors, one of the roles of the gatekeepers. Determinations of the "realistic" or "unrealistic" nature of occupational goals are evaluative judgments for which the justifications given, should demonstrate presumptions of motivation, attitude and perceived ability. The assumption of career choice as a necessary precondition to entry into the kinds of skills training offered at AVCs, e.g. janitor or indoor plant maintenance, is one under which, Willis argues ...

> It then becomes apparently possible to use the basic individualistic paradigm of matching the individual to work which actually has real currency only for middle class choice. The whole ideology and language of developmental psychology and its centrality of the individual and the meaningful choices open to him makes its entrance. "Personal development", "self-concept",and "occupational choice" all gain currency where they are only really a tautological and individualised distortion of the cultural level turning on the pivot of spurious difference - in individuals and in the jobs available.
> (p.187-88)

In other words, the values of the gatekeepers and their perceptions of the values of the students might bring those values into conflict because of the difference in class position of the two groups. Though the aspirations for higher education are encouraged and sustained by the dominant North American culture, Clark (1960) maintains that:

> While a democratic ethos may set personal ends, the standards of higher education control the means. This is the general value conflict behind the situation of the...student. The standards of higher education do not allow him to proceed past the 13th or 14th grade, and he is thus over-aspiring. This may be seen, then, as a situation of structured failure.
> (p.161-62)

Beliefs about individual worthiness and responsibility for one's own condition held by those with the power to determine the fate of others influence the outcomes of policies and programs which are intended to reduce unemployment. The presence of the notions described above in the explanations offered and attributions made by policy-makers and gatekeepers are reflected in the policy and operations of the AVCs.

While an awareness of labour market segmentation is important, the structures of segmentation only appear to exist as separate entities; separate from human agency, an artifact of "the economy". It is the contention of this study that, in fact, structures exist as representations of human agency, a codification of the beliefs and attitudes which predominate at a particular time in history. That structures persist over time, even when their currency can be called into question, is more a testimony to the glacial change in human relationships and beliefs than to the "rightness" or "goodness" of the structures. The primary focus of the research then, is to determine the persistence or change of the historical attitudes towards work, those who don't work and the relationship between education and unemployment which have been discussed.

SUMMARY

The present role of the Province in matching the supply of labour to the demand for labour, particularly in a time of rising or high unemployment, has resulted in a situation in which notions about the relationship of education to employment, the value of work and the value of those who do not work, are being called into question. Manpower policies and procedures which, in effect, blame the unemployed for their unemployment, and which do little to change the employment situation for those individuals, have historical roots which can be traced to the Poor Law Report of 1834 in England. The persistence of the attitudes embedded in the report is evident in various Canadian manpower legislation, both federal and provincial. A challenge to traditional notions of the economy and manpower planning is labour market segmentation analysis, the central thesis of which is that the labour market is fragmented into persisting groups, rather than the unbroken continuum of wages and wage levels posited by orthodox economics. The continued existence of labour market segments is due, in part, to the socialization by schools and training programs: recent research suggests that the socialization effects are different for different groups, depending upon the segment of the labour market for which they are being trained. In addition, it is argued, training programs per se can have little effect on unemployment and inter-segment mobility without a concomitant increase in jobs, particularly primary sector jobs.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was two-fold: to investigate the attitudes and beliefs about unemployment and the factors which exacerbate or alleviate it held by gatekeepers and policy-makers, and; how are these attitudes and beliefs reflected in the policy and operations of the Alberta Vocational Centres? The nature of the research therefore necessitated two types of data collection and analysis: qualitative analysis of the responses from semi-structured interviews with the policy-makers and gatekeepers, and; quantitative analysis of student data to provide descriptive information.

Setting of the Study

The study was carried out in the two largest of the four Alberta Vocational Centres (AVC) - Edmonton and Calgary. Edmonton and Calgary were chosen for a variety of reasons in addition to their size, chief among them being proximity to the researcher, the urban setting of both, the similarity of programs between the two and the similarity of the student populations among them. The other two AVCs in Grouard and Lac la Biche serve distinct rural and remote communities, hence the programs offered and population served make them virtually separate entities from the Calgary and Edmonton AVCs.

Subjects of the Study

Students - The subjects considered in the analysis of labour market segmentation were students enrolled in courses in the years 1982 - 83, the beginning of the economic downturn in the Alberta economy. Information was used from the standard Alberta Vocational Training application form, the AVT 1700, which contains demographic, educational attainment and employment history data for each student. The sheer magnitude of the student population (25,000 in two years), the lengthy process of securing permission to locate students and the transient nature of the student population precluded interviews with students which might have served to indicate the degree to which the attitudes of gatekeepers and policy-makers were shared by the individuals they were meant to help..

Policy-makers - The subjects interviewed for analysis of attitudes and beliefs of those responsible for manpower and manpower training policies at Alberta Manpower: the Minister; the Deputy Minister; the Executive Director, Employment Development Branch; the Director, Vocational Training Programs; the Director, Vocational Training Services and; the Director, Manpower Planning Services and Manpower Training. The Director, Vocational Training Services, was responsible for the provision of student financial support. It was he who determined the amount of the training allowances (AVT) and the eligibility criteria for receipt. Therefore, it was felt that his perceptions and explanations had the most direct impact on the decisions of the gatekeepers and the lives of the students. The Director, Vocational Training Programs, was responsible for funding the ad hoc, short-term (less than one year in length) programs at the AVCs, hence, it was felt that he could influence the types of opportunities available to students.

All of the policy-makers were men, almost all in their 40's and 50's. Two were professional economists, one a former school principal, one a vocational counsellor, one a former salesman and military person and one a professional public administrator.

Gatekeepers - All of the sixteen intake counsellors and counsellor aides at the two institutions were interviewed. The counsellors all held graduate degrees in Psychology and/or Educational Psychology and had been working in the field for an average of five years each. The counsellor aides of whom there were five, were clerical workers who had been working in the counselling offices for an average of four years each and had recently been reclassified into the newly-developed category of counsellor aide. The nature of their work remained the same, with the exception of typing and filing for which they were no longer responsible.

From a description of their backgrounds which they provided at the time of interview, all of the counsellors and two of the counsellor aides could be characterized as middle class, the remaining counsellor aides constituting that group characterized as the "working poor". Interestingly, the counsellor aides in the latter group demonstrated an equivalent understanding of the students' lives to that of the counsellors, but in their attributions about student behaviours they evinced anger at the attitudes of the students. This may have been due, in part, to the view the counsellor aides had of their own achievements; that they had "made it" despite the obstacles which they saw as the same obstacles confronting the students.

It was the function of the counsellors to decide the eligibility and suitability of potential students for programs and funding, as well as provide vocational and personal counselling to students enrolled in programs. Although determinations of eligibility for funding were largely based on technical criteria (although there were individual differences among counsellors in the interpretation of the criteria), determinations of suitability were almost entirely within the purview of the counsellors. It was the determination of suitability and the justifications for particular determinations made by the counsellors which were important to the research as the justifications were considered to be the source of the counsellors' behaviours which would support or overcome the effects of the findings regarding the students.

Data Collection Methods

Student Data - A computer tape containing data inputted from the AVT 1700 forms for each student enrolled at the two AVCs was loaned to the researcher by permission of Alberta Manpower. To protect the anonymity of the students, any identifying information, such as name, address and student i.d. number, was stripped from the files before they were released.

The data included in the files formed the entire source of student information and became the basis for the statistical analysis. Information from a random sample of the students (N=500) regarding educational attainment, previous job, occupational goal and program entered were coded for purposes of comparison, a more detailed discussion of which is offered under Data Analysis. A decision was made to exclude from analysis all students enrolled in English As A Second Language programs, as the students in those programs were newly-arrived immigrants and their situation as immigrants was sufficiently different from that of the native-born Canadian students as to warrant separate study.

Interview Data - Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the policy-makers and gatekeepers. The semi-structured interview format was chosen because it was felt that having some questions in common would allow for ease of comparison. The decision not to have the interview entirely structured was rooted in the paradigm of naturalistic inquiry described by Bogdan and Biklen (1982), in which they state that qualitative research is...

> ...concerned with process rather than simply outcomes or products. How do people negotiate meaning: How do certain terms and labels come to be applied? How do certain notions come to be taken as part of what we know as "common sense"? What is the natural history of the activity or events under study?
>
> (p.28)

As the focus of the interviews was not to obtain merely a desription of "what is" but to investigate "why is it so?" and "what ought it to be?" Guba and Lincoln's assertion (1981:157) that the unstructured interview was the most appropriate when trying "to search for multiple realities, truths, and perceptions" supports the method chosen for the purposes of this study. In addition, subjects were interviewed in their offices during working hours because, as Lincoln and Guba (1985:189) further argue, "phenomena of study...take their meaning as much from their contexts as they do from themselves."

The questions asked were different for each group as the functions of each of the two groups were different. Questions asked of the policy-makers were designed to elicit more general attributions about the reasons for unemployment, the reasons for the particular policy responses chosen and the anticipated efficacy of those responses. Questions asked of the gatekeepers were designed to elicit information about actual procedures for entry into the AVCs, personal feelings about and interpretations of those procedures, reflections on the nature of the students, changes in the student population, and reflections on the counsellors role in the implementation of Alberta Manpower policy.

The structured aspect of the interviews was the fact that, within each group, the same questions were asked so that responses could be compared. However, in the case of the policy-makers, the function of each of the individuals was sufficiently different as to allow for further questions to be asked which related to the specific role of the individual.

Hence, the general questions asked of the policy-makers were as follows:

1) Describe your background.

2) Describe your role and functions

3) What do you consider to be the causes of the present economic situation in Alberta; what was the role of business? of unions? of government?

4) Discuss the present policy under which you operate, the way in which that policy was developed, the

reasons for its development and your role in its development.

5) Discuss the efficacy of the policy and any changes you would make if you were God.

The questions asked of the counsellors were different than those asked of the policy-makers in that they were not intended to elicit responses indicative of an economic overview of the provincial situation. The questions asked the counsellors were as follows:

1) Describe your background previous to becoming a counsellor at AVC.

2) How long have you been working at AVC? What changes have you seen in the student population? In the procedures for entry? To what do you attribute those changes, if there are any?

3) What is the present procedure for entry?

4) What are the criteria for receiving AVT support? Do you have difficulty interpreting the criteria? What are your perceptions of the way in which other counsellors interpret the criteria?

5) What other sources of income are available to the students? Are many on social assistance? Are any trying to live on AVT funding alone? Do you believe there are any students who come for the funding alone?

6) What are your perceptions of the relationship between social assistance, unemployment insurance and

Canada Employment Centres and the way in which they help or hinder your clients?

6) Whom do you screen out?

7) Can you characterize the present student population?

8) Can you give me an example of a client whom you believed would be a success, but wasn't? Why do you think he or she wasn't?

9) Can you give me an example of a client who was a success? Why do you think he or she was?

10) Are the students getting jobs? What role does AVC play in that?

11) How do the students choose vocational goals? Do you consider their goals to be realistic? What do you do if you feel their goals are unrealistic?

12) Do you believe people are unemployed because of low educational levels?

13) What obstacles do you face?

14) What would you change for your clients if you were God?

Data Analyses

Student Data - The student data available were nominative, therefore, in order to explore the relationships, they were coded numerically for the purposes of statistical analysis. A coding system, developed by Pineo, Porter and McRoberts (1977) was used which was a modification of the Blishen scale, using the Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations (CCDO) as the source of analysis, and from which, sixteen categories of socio-economic classification of occupations were developed. The scale was used to code employment, occupational goal and program entered, the latter being used as a proxy variable for the segment of the labour market in which future employment would likely occur and for which the student was being trained. The scale used for preliminary coding was:

01 Self-employed professionals
02 Employed professionals
03 High-level management
04 Semi-professionals
05 Technicians
06 Middle management
07 Supervisors
08 Foremen
09 Skilled clerical-sales-service
10 Skilled crafts and trades
12 Semi-skilled clerical-sales-service
13 Semi-skilled manual
14 Unskilled clerical-sales-service
15 Unskilled manual
16 Farm labourers
11 Farmers

(Pineo, Porter and McRoberts, 1977:98)

The student data on previous occupation, occupational goal and program entered were related to their classification in the CCDO and that classification was then used to establish under which of the sixteen categories developed by Pineo et al. they fit. It was decided, after coding all of the data, to further reduce the sixteen categories to three to correspond to the occupational labour market segments discussed in Chapter II. Therefore, occupations which were in the Secondary segment were assigned to a category labelled 3, occupations in the Primary Subordinate segment were assigned to a category labelled 2 and occupations in the Primary Independent segment were assigned to a category labelled 1. Applicants who had "unemployed" listed as their previous occupation were those who had been unemployed for five years or more, hence they were assigned a category labelled 4. In addition, student data related to previous educational attainment level were grouped into three categories which corresponded with information about educational attainment from the literature discussed previously: category 1 included all those students with grade nine or less; category 2 included all those with some high school - grades ten and eleven; category 3 included all those with grade twelve and above.

The variables were then analyzed using the test of Chi-square from Statistical Program for the Social Sciences. As the study was exploratory rather than hypothesis-testing, the Chi-square test was used to investigate possible relationships between the variables. The relationships with a probability at the .05 or greater level of significance were considered as they related to labour market segmentation theory, the results of which are dicussed in Chapter V.

Interview Data - The interviews were transcribed and responses to questions which had been designed to elicit particular notions about work, the relationship between education and employment, the nature of the students, the perceptions of the students' concrete realities and the role of the counsellor were categorized using a process of inductive analysis. The responses were then grouped according to the categories with which they corresponded. The responses under each category were then compared within groups and responses illustrative of each category were determined. Where there were substantive variations in responses within categories, responses illustrative of the variations were determined.

Summary

The data collected were of two kinds: numerically-coded student information and interviews with policy-makers and gatekeepers, hence, each type of data necessitated analyses appropriate to the type. In the case of the student data, the test of Chi square was used to explore the possible relationships between the coded variables. The results of the interviews required an inductive process to determine general categories of responses. It was intended that the collection of a variety of data would allow for more informed speculation on the results obtained.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The findings reported in this chapter are reflective of the two types of data collected. The first findings reported are the results of the Chi Square test performed on the coded variables of previous occupation, occupational goals, last grade completed and program entered from the student data collected. While the results of the test of Chi Square are important, they are by no means the primary focus of the research; the analysis was intended to be exploratory and descriptive, rather than definitive and merely provide some basis for speculation. To do a segmentation analysis justice would require an entirely separate study.

The second group of findings reported are the responses from the interviews conducted with the policy-makers and the gatekeepers. It is the results of the interviews which form the primary focus of the study and to which greater attention and discussion are paid. Because the responses, particularly those of the counsellors, were virtually identical for each question, there is no table of response frequencies. Rather, where responses vary at all, it is noted in the text.

RELATIONSHIPS AMONG STUDENT DATA VARIABLES

This section represents the exploratory use of the Chi Square test to analyze the possible relationships which exist between the variables described above, in particular, the relationships between education (last grade completed) and previous labour market segment (previous occupation), Table 1; aspirations (occupational goal), Table 2; and future labour market segment (program entered), Table 3. The Chi Square test was used on the total sample as well as on the groups separated out by gender. The results are presented in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

In addition, the relationship between previous labour market segment (previous occupation) and aspirations (occupational goal), Table 4; and the relationship between aspirations (occupational goal) and future labour market segment (program entered), Table 5; were explored using the Chi Square test.

According to Tables 1, 2, and 3, the relationship of each of the variables to the last grade completed was meaningful. Each will be discussed separately.

Variable 1: Previous Occupation

Table 1 shows that, in the total group, educational attainment bore little relationship to the segment of the labour market in which the individuals had been previously employed. Of particular interest are those who were long-term unemployed: Of the total group, 43.2%

TABLE I*

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT OF PREVIOUS OCCUPATION

PREVIOUS OCCUPATION BY LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT			LAST GRADE COMPLETED					Row Total	
		Grade 12+		Grade 10-11		Grade 0-9		Male/Female	
1 Primary Independent	Total	7	22.6	15	48.4	9	29.0	31	6.5
	Male	2	10.5	9	47.4	8	42.1	19	8.9
	Female	5	41.7	6	50.0	1	8.3	12	4.6
2 Primary Subordinate	Total	21	15.9	61	46.2	50	37.9	132	27.8
	Male	5	12.5	14	35.0	21	52.5	40	18.7
	Female	16	17.4	47	51.1	29	31.5	92	35.2
3 Primary Secondary	Total	32	19.5	64	39.0	68	41.5	164	34.5
	Male	11	13.8	31	38.8	38	47.5	80	37.4
	Female	21	25.0	33	39.3	30	35.7	84	32.2
4 Unemployed	Total	64	43.2	33	22.3	51	34.5	148	31.2
	Male	34	45.3	17	22.7	32	32.0	75	35.0
	Female	30	41.1	16	21.9	27	37.0	73	28.0
Column Total		124	26.1	173	36.4	178	37.5	475	100.0
	Male	52	24.3	71	33.2	91	42.5	214	100.0
	Female	72	41.1	102	21.9	87	37.0	261	100.0

* frequencies and percentages are reported in the cells.

		df	probability
chi square for total	39.54	6	.00
chi square for males	28.89	6	.00
chi square for females	21.40	6	.00

had grade 12 and above, 22.3% had some high school and 34.5% had less than grade 9; this is approximately the same for both men and women. In addition, 62.7% of those with grade 12 or higher were either unemployed or employed in the lowest occupational segment, the Secondary segment, compared to 61.3% of those with some high school and 76.0% of those with less than grade [illegible] The weak relationship between schooling and employment suggested could be the result of several factors: it might be a reflection of an extremely tight job market in which the number of Primary jobs available to high school graduates is small; it could be a reflection of age, in that those with less schooling tend to be older and may have gotten (and retained) jobs when there were lower educational requirements for entry.

Variable 2: Occupational Goal

As indicated in Table 2, regardless of the last grade completed, the majority of students (59.0%) want jobs in the highest occupational segment, the Primary Independent segment. Only 10.2% want jobs in the lowest segment in roughly equal numbers for each category of last grade completed. When men and women are separated out the differences are striking: what men choose as their occupational goal appears to have an inverse relationship to their last grade completed, while for women, those with the lowest educational attainment relatively consistently

TABLE III*

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT OF PROGRAM ENTERED

			LAST GRADE COMPLETED						Row Total Male/Female	
			Grade 12+		Grade 10-11		Grade 0-9			
PROGRAM ENTERED BY LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT	1 Primary Independent	Total	32	23.9	60	44.8	42	31.3	134	34.5
		Male	10	20.4	22	44.9	17	34.7	49	31.2
		Female	22	25.9	38	44.7	25	29.4	85	36.8
	2 Primary Subordinate	Total	27	50.9	20	37.7	6	11.3	53	13.7
		Male	6	60.0	3	30.0	1	10.0	10	6.4
		Female	21	48.8	17	39.5	5	11.6	43	18.6
	3 Secondary	Total	23	11.4	76	37.8	102	50.7	201	51.8
		Male	12	12.2	35	35.7	51	52.0	98	62.4
		Female	11	10.7	41	39.8	51	49.5	103	44.6
		Column Total	82	21.1	156	40.2	150	38.7	388	100.0
		Male	28	17.8	60	38.2	69	43.9	157	100.0
		Female	54	23.4	96	41.6	81	35.1	231	100.0

* frequencies and percentages are reported in the cells.

		df	probability
chi square for total	52.45	4	.00
chi square for males	17.81	4	.00
chi square for females	33.22	4	.00

(63.1) chose occupations in the two highest segments, Primary Independent and Primary Subordinate. This compares with 82.5% for those with some high school and 54.5% for those with grade 12 or higher. The discrepancy between the findings for men and women could possibly be due to several factors: the women may have a notion of career where the men are looking for whatever they perceive will give them immediate employment; it is considered more important by the women to have the status of "white collar" work; or the men might be choosing on the basis of what they consider to be the realities of the labour market.

Variable 3: Program Code

As is demonstrated in Table 3, the last grade completed has little relationship with the program entered. Only 40% were straightforward, that is they entered a program which represented the segment of the labour market for which their educational attainment had prepared them. Approximately 33% dropped to a lower segment and 28% entered programs in a higher segment, therefore, for 73%, their situation remained the same or worsened; again, this was about the same for both men and women. The results might reflect several things: the small number of Primary sector training programs relative to Secondary sector training programs, hence few available places; or counsellor influence in student placement; or possibly the tests used to determine ability.

TABLE II*

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL GOAL

OCCUPATIONAL GOAL CODE BY LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT		LAST GRADE COMPLETED							
		Grade 12+		Grade 10-11		Grade 0-9		Row Total Male/Female	
1 Primary Independent	Total	38	19.3	82	41.6	77	39.1	197	59.0
	Male	11	13.6	27	33.3	43	53.1	81	61.4
	Female	27	23.3	55	47.4	34	29.3	116	57.4
2 Primary Subordinate	Total	31	30.1	35	34.0	37	35.9	103	30.8
	Male	7	26.9	8	30.8	11	42.3	26	19.7
	Female	24	31.2	27	35.1	26	33.8	77	38.1
3 Secondary	Total	14	41.2	12	35.3	8	23.5	34	10.2
	Male	8	32.0	10	40.0	7	28.0	25	18.9
	Female	6	66.7	2	22.2	1	11.1	9	4.5
	Column Total	83	24.9	129	38.6	122	36.5	334	100.0
	Male	26	19.7	45	34.1	61	46.2	132	100.0
	Female	57	28.2	84	41.6	61	30.2	202	100.0

* frequencies and percentages are reported in the cells.

		df	probability
chi square for total	10.30	4	.03
chi square for males	7.21	4	.12
chi square for females	9.94	4	.04

In Table 4 are the results of the test of Chi Square on the variable of previous labour market segment (previous occupation) and aspirations (occupational goal).

Variable 1: Occupational Goal Code

As can be seen in Table 4, 70% of those in the middle and lowest occupational segments aspired to higher occupational segments, while only 4.8% wished to move down. In this case, gender had no significant bearing on the aspirations.

In Table 5 are the results of the test of Chi square used to explore the possible relationship between previous labour market segment and future segment (program entered). The results were not significant; it did not appear to matter for future employment in what segment individuals were previously employed. This may have been the effect of counsellor influence.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF STUDENT DATA

For only a relatively small percentage of the students (33%), did the programs appear to have any potential positive effect on intersegment mobility; for most, their condition remained the same or worsened. While most students wanted to better their condition, the programs were not fitted to their aspirations , but to other variables. Possible explanation for the apparent effects of the programs might lie within the attitudes and actions of the policy-makers and gatekeepers.

TABLE IV*

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT OF PREVIOUS OCCUPATION AND OCCUPATIONAL GOAL

PREVIOUS OCCUPATION BY LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT		OCCUPATIONAL GOAL BY LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT							
		1. Primary Independent		2. Primary Subordinate		3. Secondary		Row Total Male/Female	
1 Primary Independent	Total	13	56.5	6	26.1	4	17.4	23	9.2
	Male	7	58.3	1	8.3	4	33.3	12	11.9
	Female	6	54.5	5	45.5	0	0.0	11	7.4
2 Primary Subordinate	Total	67	65.7	33	32.4	2	2.0	102	41.0
	Male	20	66.7	9	30.0	1	3.3	30	29.7
	Female	47	65.3	24	33.3	1	1.4	72	48.6
3 Secondary	Total	73	58.9	34	27.4	17	13.7	124	49.8
	Male	35	59.3	10	16.9	14	23.7	59	58.4
	Female	38	58.5	24	36.9	3	4.6	65	43.9
	Column Total	153	61.4	73	29.3	23	9.2	249	100.0
	Male	62	61.4	20	19.8	19	18.8	101	100.0
	Female	91	61.5	53	35.8	4	2.7	148	100.0

* frequencies and percentages are reported in the cells.

		df	probability
chi square for total	11.26	4	.02
chi square for males	8.73	4	.06
chi square for females	2.41	4	.65

TABLE V*

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT OF THE PROGRAM ENTERED AND PREVIOUS OCCUPATION

PREVIOUS OCCUPATION BY LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT		PROGRAM ENTERED BY LABOUR MARKET SEGMENT							
		1. Primary Independent		2. Primary Subordinate		3. Secondary		Row Total Male/Female	
1 Primary Independent	Total	7	25.9	2	7.4	18	66.7	27	8.8
	Male	3	18.8	0	0.0	13	81.3	16	12.8
	Female	4	36.4	2	18.2	5	45.5	11	6.0
2 Primary Subordinate	Total	38	30.2	22	17.5	66	52.4	126	41.0
	Male	12	33.3	4	11.1	20	55.6	36	28.8
	Female	26	28.9	18	20.0	46	51.1	90	49.5
3 Secondary	Total	55	35.7	20	13.0	79	51.3	154	50.2
	Male	21	28.8	5	6.8	47	64.4	73	58.4
	Female	34	42.0	15	18.5	32	39.5	81	44.5
	Column Total	100	32.6	44	14.3	163	53.1	307	100.0
	Male	36	28.8	9	7.2	80	64.0	125	100.0
	Female	64	35.2	35	19.2	83	45.6	182	100.0

* frequencies and percentages are reported in the cells.

		df	probability
chi square for total	4.05	4	0.39
chi square for males	3.89	4	0.42
chi square for females	3.39	4	0.49

INTERVIEW DATA

Policy-makers - No single individual in Alberta Manpower is responsible for policy, rather, formulation is the responsibility of a number of people operating under a variety of conditions. Because of the apparent complexity of policy formulation due to the number of factors which can influence the process, it was somewhat surprising to find the unanimity of opinion and explanation regarding the general economic situation and policy response. Of the six individuals interviewed, four had been working in Alberta Manpower in senior positions for an average of 15 years; only the Minister and Deputy Minister were recent additions, having been appointed when the Department was split from Advanced Education after the 1982 provincial election. All of the subjects identified the economic recession and rising unemployment as the reasons for the creation of a separate Department of Manpower - so that those issues could be given a higher profile. Hence, according to the reports of the policy-makers interviewed, the activities of the Department since the split consisted almost entirely of developing policies and programs devoted to responding to unemployment.

The subjects were asked about their perceptions of the causes of the economic situation then being experienced in Alberta at the time the interviews were taking place. They were asked to speculate on the perceived efficacy of the policies introduced to respond to that situation. In addition, two of the subjects with responsibilities which directly affected the AVCs - the Director, Vocational Training Services and the Director, Vocational Training Programs - were interviewed at greater length about the policies and programs specifically related to the AVCs.

Largely, the responses of all of the subjects on general issues can be grouped into three categories:

1) Attributions for the causes of the economic situation;

2) Justifications for the present policy, under which are subsumed attributions about the nature of the unemployed and notions about the relationship of education to employment.

3) Justifications for not choosing alternative policy responses.

The subjects' responses about the general situation from the interviews will be reported within each of the above categories. Information relating to students and programs at the AVCs reported by the two individuals responsible, will be discussed under the heading of "Specific Issues" subsequent to the report of the general responses.

1: Attributions for the causes of the economic situation

All of the subjects identified the sharp fall in gas and oil prices as the cause of the recession; two of them further identifying the National Energy Policy as a contributory cause. All of the subjects described the previous economic boom as "artificial", a "rocket ride", "the goose that laid the golden egg" and unable to have lasted. When queried as to the reasons for the artificiality of the economic boom, most of the subjects identified unions, immigrants and in-migrants as responsible, each of the subjects explaining that all groups drove wages up quickly, thereby creating an inflationary situation. Unions were now perceived as "unwilling to face the economic reality of the marketplace and make the necessary adjustments".

Moreover, most of the subjects asserted that it was unions which were responsible for the high rates of unemployment being experienced at that time: all suggested that as the construction industry (a heavily unionized sector) was the hardest hit by the recession, continuing high rates of unemployment in that industry were due to the workers having become "soft" and "lazy" during the boom and unwilling "to move where the work is". Three respondents used the example of their grandfathers who, in the words of one, "came here at the turn of the century and spent his time surveying; prepared to do anything, anywhere...we don't have that mentality anymore." In addition to the change in mentality, some of the respondents suggested that they felt immigrants had taken many of the jobs which formerly had gone to native

Albertans, "because we haven't had to do them and because somebody else has come in and took [sic] over the bottom end".

When the respondents were asked if there was anything the provincial government could have done during the boom to have made the recession less severe, most of the subjects answered "no", although one did not agree, answering that "the government could have restricted in some way the use of the province...someone else has bought it and sold it".

All of the subjects identified the type of unemployment being experienced as "structural", however, when asked about the future of the economy, they asserted that oil and gas "would come back" although construction would "never be the same".

2: Justifications for the present policy

When asked about the present policy, all subjects identified increased provision of skills training and academic upgrading as the policy direction; some of the subjects added that job creation in the form of wage subsidy programs was also part of the policy. However, the individual responsible for the wage subsidy programs saw those programs as declining in a time of high unemployment and lay-offs. Most of the subjects stated that they believed there was a relationship between unemployment and education; that low educational levels led to unemployment. When queried as to whether the converse would be true - increasing levels of education would decrease unemployment - they agreed that it would, because, as one suggested,

> "...a guy with a grade 9 is more employable than a guy with a grade 6...for starters, he knows more math. He probably can communicate better. I think he can operate better in the marketplace with a grade 9 than you could with a grade 6 - you probably haven't even gotten ahold of your fractions yet."

Two respondents added that they believed that people would have to be retrained many times in the future; that people "more and more have to go into the workforce with the attitude that 'I'm not going to be a plumber all my life. I'm not going to be a teacher all my life'."

When asked about the increased credentialism required for entry into jobs and courses, two of the subjects suggested that better education makes "a better employee" and "decreases hiring costs", while the other subjects felt that the high school diploma was being "oversold" and "inflated". All of the respondents were in agreement that training was valuable because it increased an individual's "marketability", while three of the subjects added that training maintained an unemployed person's "affiliation with the workforce", presumably implying that the training would act as a substitute in lieu of actual work. When it was suggested to the respondents that increased marketability seemed useless if there were no jobs, four of the respondents stated categorically that there were jobs, while the other two respondents argued that even though there were no jobs at present, when jobs did become available "in the future" the trained individual would then be prepared for them - a sort of "stockpiling" notion.

When asked to speculate on what they would change if they were God, all of the respondents focussed their changes on the unemployed individuals, identifying attitudes which they believed would need to change before the unemployed would find work. Among the attitudes identified were "greed", "unwillingness to move", "unwillingness to change", "not prepared to take any job", and "high expectations".

3: Justifications for not choosing alternative policy responses

All of the respondents stated that they believed the economy would eventually "turn around". In addition, they all argued that the turn around would be driven by the private sector. When the subjects were asked to delineate the role they saw for Alberta Manpower at present, most responded "maintaining employment", while one responded "nothing - let the misery level rise and the chips fall where they may". All were queried as to the possibility of long-term job creation as a solution, but all said "no", citing the artificiality of public sector employment, because, in the opinion of one of the subjects, artificially-created jobs have "no chance of surviving once you quit feeding them".

Discussion of issues specific to AVCs

During a discussion with one of the subjects about the reasoning behind the provision of AVT training support to students, he opined that the funding was "designed for the person that has never been a success yet in life as far as the work world is concerned". Because some indication of the way in which people are valued is reflected in the amount of money which they are paid, the individual responsible for the training allowances (AVT) was asked to discuss the provision of the allowances.

When asked how the amounts for allowances were decided, he replied, "Nothing is laid down. What we utilize is the poverty level that's developed by the Social and Economic Council...We try to keep within their figures." When questioned further about whether the training allowance was intended to provide a living allowance he asserted, "No, the focus is to assist a person with training...We have an agreement with Social Assistance - Social Assistance will maintain basic needs and we provide tuition needs." However, when it was brought to his attention that, according to the counsellors, Social Assistance had been cutting students off when they received AVT support, he explained,

> We've seen that happening because of turnover of staff at Social Assistance - they don't know their whole manual and are unaware of the agreement between the two departments. If it comes to our attention, we call and correct it.

He added that there had been no change in the amount of the allowances for three years. The training allowance is paid as a daily rate; when asked to explain the reasons for this, he replied:

> We're trying to treat people like adults. We run into problems with this with education. Most adults get paid, or the ones we deal with, get paid on a daily rate and if they're at work, they get paid and if they're not at work, they don't get paid - we follow the same system...We've tried to emulate somewhat of the workforce set-up in our system.

The criteria for eligibility were discussed, in particular the criterion which establishes the applicant as single and independent:

> What is a single, independent person? Our regulations are fairly loosely written in terms of flexibility - it would be much easier to administer if it were in black and white...With single people, many moved away from home and now, because of economics, they've moved home and are they now dependent or independent?

When it was suggested that the students who don't get AVT funding because they've moved back home are, perforce, dependent, he asserted,

> Yes, but how do you justify to the taxpayers when you see someone in class being paid as disadvantaged who lives at home with his parents who make $100,000 a year and he drives a Jag to school? The taxpayer says "What's with this disadvantage? So, there are two sides to the coin; we're trying to be fair to both.

Finally, he was asked to speculate as to whether he believed the counsellors at the AVCs were doing anything contrary to the intent of the training programs as he envisioned that intent. He suggested that many of the counsellors...

> ...are more advocates for the individuals rather than counsellors. To me, a counsellor is one who deals with reality the way it is - but instead, someone feels bad, and they [the counsellors] think everybody has a right and they become advocates.

The Director, Vocational Training Programs, discussed the types of programs his unit supports. When asked on what basis did he refuse funding, he stated that he screened out those programs which he did not consider "viable". Asked to elaborate on the meaning of viability, he responded:

> We train for employment. There are two expressions to cover the programs we're not interested in: one is the "touchy-feely", the other is "need to know"[sic] - there are things that are "nice to know" and "need to know" - we don't look too favourably on the "nice to know".

Queried further as to whether the institution needed to demonstrate that there would be jobs for students at the end of a program in order for that program to be funded, he argued:

> Well, they're supposed to demonstrate there are jobs for them, but I personally don't hold to that. If I want to take a one year course in radio tech and they say "You can't take that because there aren't any jobs", well, that's not fair to the individual because if we're a free enterprise system as we say we are, the student should be able to make up his own damn mind - as long as he's forewarned...We're supposed to be training for jobs.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS WITH POLICY-MAKERS

There were many apparently contradictory statements made by the respondents, particularly by the Director, Vocational Training Services and the Director, Vocational Training Programs. While an attempt was made to point out some of the contradictions, not only between assertions each individual had made within the interview, but between the assertions made and information from the economic literature discussed in Chapter I, the subjects did not seem to view the contradictions as particular challenges to their ideological orientation. In fact, all of the responses were offered in a spirit of rationality and "rightness", with little critical self-examination evident.

A charity orientation toward the unemployed was expressed ("to help those who have never been a success") which compounded the notion of the unemployed as somehow lacking the moral qualities to change their situation. A more extensive discussion of the implications of the interview responses, as well as some of the subjective phenomena experienced will take place in Chapter V. In addition, similarities and differences in perceptions between policy-makers and gatekeepers will be indicated, insofar as they have implications for one of the central questions of this research.

Gatekeepers - As found among the policy-makers, the virtual unanimity of belief expressed by the counsellors, both within and between the two AVCs, is demonstrated below. Largely, their responses can be characterized as reports of attitudes, perceptions and behaviours which relate to three broad categories:

1) Admissions Procedures - includes discussions about suitability criteria, student financial support and occupational goals.

2) Students - includes discussions of motivation, perceptions of character, reasons for returning to school, relationship between education and employment and counsellors' wishes for students.

3) Counsellor's Role - includes responses related to vocational counselling and extra-academic effects of being in the institution.

Due to the high agreement between and among counsellors, responses are discussed generally within the context of each category. Specific remarks which characterize the general consensus are provided. Significant variations in responses to particular issues are noted, with quotes illustrative of the variations provided.

1: Admissions Procedures

Description of the Procedures

The admissions procedures vary insignificantly between the two institutions, the primary variation being when the applicant is seen - upon application (Edmonton) or shortly after (Calgary). Calgary had instituted General Information Sessions (G.I.S.) on an on-going basis for the purpose of processing the large numbers of applicants. It was at the G.I.S. that potential students filled out the AVT 1700 forms under the guidance of a counsellor aide, and had preliminary questions answered. An applicant would receive an appointment with a counsellor if he or she could not attend the G.I.S., if the counsellor aide suspected that the applicant was "odd" in any way, there were discrepancies on the applicant's AVT 1700 form, or the applicant had questions that could not be answered at the G.I.S. Approximately 80-90% of all applicants saw a counsellor; the average waiting time for the interview was 4-6 weeks. While Edmonton did not run G.I.S., the counsellors saw approximately the same percentage of applicants as did the Calgary counsellors, and for the same reasons, although, in the case of Edmonton, counsellor aides performed a sort of "triage", determining the route for an applicant to follow on an individual in-coming basis rather than at a group session.

Once applicants in either AVC had submitted their application and had their counsellor interview (if required), some were tested if the program required pre-testing, - Registered Nursing Assistant (RNA) and

Office Careers - or the counsellor requested the student be tested. Tests were administered approximately 4-6 weeks after the counsellor interview. The tests results were mailed to the applicants, generally about 2-3 months after testing. If the students were successful in gaining admission, they then waited for placement in a program: for RNA, the wait was 1 1/2 - 2 years; for academic upgrading at less than the grade 6 level, the wait was 2 years; other programs varied between 4-6months to 1 year.

For programs over one year in duration, students were required to apply for loans from the Student Finance Board; this requirement applied to the RNA program and some of the Business Programs. For all other programs, students were sponsored by Canada Employment and Immigration (CEIC), Social Assistance, UIC, Indian Affairs, or provincial AVT (which supplied support at the same rate as the CEIC training allowance). The largest sponsorship was accounted for by the provincial AVT (60-70% of the students) and CEIC (20-25% of the students).

Counsellors' Responses

The counsellors expressed concern that many applicants were attempting to enter AVC solely to receive the training allowance. In fact, many of the counsellors used the applicants' initial questions regarding AVT funding as an informal screening device: if an applicant's first questions were about funding or he or she said "I hear you can get paid for going to school" the counsellors reported that they tended to view that applicant unfavourably and many said that they believed that those students would not succeed. However, all of the counsellors reported that the AVT allowance was too low for an individual to live on solely, nevertheless, all reported that they knew of many students attempting to do so.

Moreover, all of the counsellors reported conflicts with Social Assistance; that Social Assistance was cutting students off if the students were admitted to AVC. Many of the counsellors suggested that it was some sort of game being played by welfare caseworkers, or that the welfare workers were mistrustful of their clients who wanted to be students, that they thought they were taking "the easy way out". As one counsellor stated,

> ...there's a bit of a competition between who can hand out the least amount of money. Social Services sends them to us, we send them back to Social Services and we all send them to Manpower. And if you happen to be treaty, we make you jump through the Indian Affairs hoop as well.

One of the counsellors explained that if a student was collecting social assistance or UIC, their sponsoring agency had to approve their coming to classes. He reported that "...if they come to classes without the approval, then they are cut off. On Social Assistance, people have to go through an EO [employment opportunity] worker. Social Assistance feels the AVT $17.50 [the amount paid by AVT as an addition to social assistance benefits if a student is receiving welfare] should be deducted."

While counsellors did not like the idea that students might be coming solely for the money, many suggested that students who enter with higher levels of education (grade 9 and above) could not be doing this because, "they could make so much more on a job. But they do see it as a place to fulfill their expectations: they're going to move into the middle-class; they're going to get a profession."

This led to discussions about occupational goals. When asked to comment on the realistic or unrealistic nature of the goals which students selected, some of the counsellors averred that the choice of a goal was a forced choice; that students had to enter an occupational goal in order to be considered for funding and admission, the "majority are made up because they know they need to have them". However, all of the counsellors believed the majority of goals stated were unrealistic. When asked to explain in what way the goals were unrealistic, all asserted that, in the words of one counsellor,

> they seem to be where "people think the jobs are, like they're looking for something and they don't have any skills to get a job and this seems to be an area where people are getting jobs, so this is what I'll do rather than looking at their own skills and abilities and aptitudes and what would be suited to them and what they would like. It seems to be dictated by the job market.

Or, as another counsellor suggested, "Every second person wants to be in computer programming...It's like they come in without having researched things."

Asked to consider, then, who would be suitable for admission, the counsellors generally agreed that they were looking for someone in a "stable living situation", "someone with their finances under control", "someone who's going to be able to live on a very limited financial base", and "someone who's prepared to make that sacrifice" [referring to limited funding]. In addition, many felt, as did one counsellor, that:

> [The students] should have to go through a goal search and vocational planning before they get admission - it would make them more dedicated to the process. And if they have a goal change along the way, it should be okayed by the counsellor.

However, despite the discussion of the variety of screening devices the counsellors used, one of the counsellors maintained:

> The best and most effective screening device we have is the waiting list. It takes long enough to get into the program that the unstable, the disorganized, move or don't advise us and we lose their address and they show up and reapply 2 or 3 times and never do get in because they never are able to maintain a stable enough address or keep us up-to-date.

Interestingly, two of the counsellor aides expressed most anger with incoming students who choose as a goal simply "employment" or "job" because the aides felt that it was the students' responsibility to "check out the employment situation before they ever come into it [the program]" and they should be enthusuastic about their career goals. They were particularly angry with the attitude of some students that "I'll take this course, don't know where it will take me and I don't care."

2: Students

One of the popular programs offered is Building Service Worker (BSW) which is janitorial training. Most of the counsellors discussed its popularity, and, in the words of one of the counsellor aides, "Anybody that needs a job asks for it [BSW]. I ask why - the big issue is health, heart problems, back problems. So I check out their work history and look at responsibility, motivation." The notion of motivation for the counsellors was a pervasive one; all of the counsellors believed that motivation was critical to student success. However, not any motivation was acceptable: counsellors would not accept funding as a reasonable motivation. As one counsellor said,

> ...their very first question is 'when do I get my first cheque and how much is it going to be and can I get more?'...The decision to go back to school is made because they know they can get money here.

All of the counsellors saw the economic recession as responsible for the increasing numbers of applicants to AVC. One of the counsellors acknowledged the recession as responsible for the increase in applicants, but suggested that even so,

> a lot of people are clamouring to get back into school for the wrong reasons - simply because they're unable to find a job...They're coming here sometimes for the financial rewards of coming and not because they're committed to the program. Many people ask "What's the first program to get into?"

The counsellors did not believe that this had always been so; many felt that when the economy was booming, the students were coming "because they genuinely wanted to better their situation". The fact that students were coming because they couldn't get jobs was seen by the counsellors as a different motivation than the one the counsellors themselves had had when they went to school. One of the counsellors characterized the difference:

> Most of them are not making any sacrifices to be here because they were disadvantaged when they came - whereas, for most of us who went through school, there were certain sacrifices that had to be made, in terms of one's lifestyle, in terms of what you could buy.

Many of the counsellors believed that the admissions procedures were a good test of motivation and that if applicants didn't show up for testing because of fear or for whatever reasons then, it was assumed that they "really don't want the program. If they can't come for the test, can they come for school?" As well, they believed the process of application screened students on the basis of self-reliance. The counsellors all recounted stories of the numbers of applicants who bring friends and relatives with them, but they felt, "[W]e don't want them to come because we want to see how people do on their own."

When discussing for whom, then, is AVC, most of the counsellors described "ideal" students as generally women "...who were doing very well in school up until the time they experienced something that caused them to leave school." The counsellors had a very particular idea of what constituted the "ideal" student: "Someone...who's worked for a few years...Somebody who's got life fairly well organized; somebody who simply quit school too early for whatever reason and they haven't necessarily had a lot of personal problems holding them back", in fact, a person who "adapted very nicely".

The notion of the ideal, however, contrasted strongly with the counsellors' characterizations of the reality. Almost invariably, the students were characterized as "very impulsive and self-gratifying; gratification right now - I think it's kind of childish"; "immature"; with the "inability to make any kind of decision, to think for themselves"; "lack of sophistication. They lack the ability to perceive the consequences of their behaviour"; "impulsivity pattern - never stopping and thinking that there's an alternative to what you're doing". When asked to speculate on the possible reasons for these behaviours, counsellors cited the students' upbringing which was described by one of the counsellors:

> A number of our people have been misfits, or disadvantaged intellectually. Their formative years could have been more conducive to success in this world. Some had five or six foster homes or were born on reserves.

When asked what obstacles these students then encountered at AVC, one of the counsellors said, "That we don't do brain transplants."

Not all of the counsellors shared this particular view; some of the counsellors suggested that the causes of students' behaviours were also economic and characterized the students as:

> Financially disadvantaged and that's what causes the majority of their problems. I'm a strong believer in money can buy a certain level of happiness; certainly it allows you to rise above the lower levels of Mazlow's hierarchy. And most of our students are just barely managing to get by from day to day - it doesn't leave a lot of room for self-actualization. All their crises are related to money; whether they're related to having no money or because having no money led to a series of decisions that got them into this mess in the first place, money is certainly one of the biggest problems.

However, when given the opportunity to speculate on what they would change if they were God, only one of the counsellors and one of the counsellor aides said they would change the financial situation of the students. The counsellor aide asserted that she would like to make sure that "...anyone who comes back would have a decent level of living so they didn't need to worry about literally feeding their kids, putting shoes on their feet or affording coats in winter". The counsellor agreed:

> I wish they could have more money, but I don't know if more money in the long run would help. For a lot of them, that's all it is. If you could up their income to something liveable, something above the poverty line, they would be just fine...There would be a certain percentage of those folks that even if they had a liveable income still would screw up, but they're everywhere. I mean, you meet people who are

> doctors, lawyers, judges, prime ministers - that are making lots of money and they're still screwing up. I don't think they'd be coming to see me as much if they had a liveable income: they'd be able to handle school and cope and all that stuff if they had a liveable income.

Mostly, however, the majority of counsellors believed that having more money would be...

> ...compounding the problems. Most have no sense of budgetting. In a normal family environment kids are taught to save their allowances. They [the students] haven't learned to make choices, set priorities...if a crisis comes up, they haven't set money aside for a crisis

For these reasons, the majority of changes the counsellors suggested were largely in the psychology of the students. One said that she would "change their perceptions of themselves and that they are responsible for themselves and are controlling a lot of what goes on". Many suggested attitudinal changes: "We don't instill attitudes. I'd like to see the attitudinal thing there before they come. All skill training is no good without...attitude. It's a lifestyle issue". The attitude many saw as necessary to change was:

> [I]n Alberta particularly, lots think that the world owes them a high-paying job that they don't have to work at: great hours, great working conditions, big money and little effort to get there...There's lots of part-time work out there, but most don't want to work for $4.00 an hour.

In fact, most of the counsellors viewed the atttitudes and behaviours of the students as more important reasons for the students' previous low employment or unemployment than the fact that the students had low educational levels; they rated educational attainment quite low, "On a scale of 1 to 10, maybe a 3". Instead, they suggested, the problems were...

> ...social functioning, work attitude...work attitude from the employer's point-of-view - different motivational set; not placing their job as #1, they're irresponsible,...too egocentric, not an "institutional-man" or "team-man".

Some attributed the problems to "low levels of ability", while others attributed them to "youth and irresponsibility; trying to get by putting in as little effort as possible", but despite the fact that all were working in a training institution, none saw training programs as useful preparation for employment. Asked if they saw any relationship between education and employment, the counsellors expressed some concern, as characterized by one of them:

> That's something I'll always worry about a lot. Prior to the recession we used to say "If we could get people training they would have jobs." I have a lot of reservations about selling that to people because the facts just don't fit that: we have high unemployment with people that are trained that we're really selling a bill of goods to tell a person, "Well, pick up your literacy and get a little training and employment is going to be there. We keep saying it; at least the politicians keep saying it.

In fact, many counsellors blamed the politicians for the situation and suggested that "training may be a stop-gap measure. Rather than have them on the streets, you have them in an institution - they continue to be unemployed".

Most believed that the programs couldn't help, either because the training wasn't really up to market standards, as suggested by one counsellor aide: "People are leaving General Office Typist with 35 w.p.m. I worked as a secretary for 10-12 years and 35 w.p.m. doesn't even get you into a typing class, never mind a job." or because they considered the students "unemployable", doubting whether the students "could compete in the job market anyway...For those who want to dig and find jobs, they get them without skills". Although some of the counsellors maintained that the programs gave the students a "fighting chance" or made them "more marketable", the general consensus was expressed by a counsellor who speculated that "the ones who are employable are still finding jobs and the one's who aren't, no matter what type of training they get, are still not finding employment."

The conflict to which the counsellors attested in their situation, namely the lack of relationship between the training being provided and an improvement in employment prospects for the students, caused contradictions for only a few; most saw their role as an opportunity to effect some changes, in addition to which, they saw benefits for the students which were extra-academic.

3: Counsellors' Role

All of the counsellors asserted that there were benefits for students being in the institution, despite the bleak employment prospects for most of them. All of the counsellors perceived that the socialization effects of the institutions helped the students "feel better about themselves; they experience some success and become more reliable, motivated." The counsellors believed that their job was...

> ...to assist an individual to become self-supporting and able to live in our society...If a person were having a problem holding a job because they have no interpersonal skills, [we are] getting them skilled in that area...they may not get a job, but they feel better about themselves.

In addition, the counsellors saw the effects on students as wide-ranging: "If they can adjust to our system, they can deal better with the outside; the skills are transferable." One counsellor even expressed the wish for a student residence, saying, "We could teach them responsibility living in a residence." Others did not go so far, instead describing the techniques counsellors used within their present jobs to "assess and "develop vocational maturity". Some emphasized the requirements they placed on the individual before recommending them for entrance, such as requiring "them to get a home, pay off debts" or requesting documents from physicians and psychiatrists. Most often, however, the counsellors spoke in terms of "talking tough" with the students,

> trying to get the individual to be more realistic in terms of work...to understand all the types of things they're going to have to do if they want work: not only specific training but personal

> development...Trying to get them to be realistic in terms of expectations regarding work and employment.

Part of the "reality therapy" was adjusting students to lowered expectations by helping the students choose vocational goals more consonant with the counsellors' image of the student, so that, "If they come in with grade 8 and want university, they can't do it. We have to 'downgrade' them." The counselling that was given to students was "helping people in their awareness; to edge them closer to self-actualization". This was viewed by counsellors as:

> ...making the individual responsible for who they are and what they are and what they're going to get. What I wish is that they'd take the opportunities that they have, even if they're limited; people would become self-reliant...people are dependent on bad habits, narrow vision.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS WITH GATEKEEPERS

The responses of the counsellors can be seen to reflect the perceptions of individuals who consider themselves to be working under conditions, not of their own making, but within which, they are "making the best of a bad situation". They considered themselves to have a realistic understanding of the lives of the students with whom they worked and a better knowledge of the exigencies of the workplace than the politicians.

While the politicians continued to assert the relationship between education and employment, even if the effect was only to "maintain" employment, the counsellors saw no relationship. Both groups, however, made attributions about the causes of unemployment which were individualistic, using notions of motivation and right attitude in their explanations. The counsellors appeared more preoccupied with psychologizing the reasons for unemployment than did the policy-makers, who tended to attach a lack of moral values to the unemployed in their explanations. The psychologizing of the counsellors is not surprising given their profession, however, the sources of the attitudes of the policy-makers are not as easily determined without more information on their backgrounds.

Nevertheless, despite the origins of the attitudes of both groups (about which we can only really speculate), the effects of their attitudes have repercussions for applicants to the AVCs in particular, and the unemployed in general. The apparent effects of their understandings and explanations will be discussed more fully in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of the test of Chi Square performed on the student data, using the program entered as a proxy variable for the segment of the labour market for which students are being trained, while by no means conclusive, do tend to suggest a relationship indicative of the effects ascribed to labour market segmentation discussed in the literature: that increases in training will have little effect on inter-segment mobility. For training to have an effect on inter-segment mobility, the literature suggests, the must be a concomitant increase in the number of primary sector jobs available. Even were there to be more jobs available than there were at the time the research was conducted, predictions from much of the economic literature suggested that the real growth in new jobs would be in the secondary segment of the labour market; the segment for which most of the students at the AVCs were being trained. Therefore, even had their employment prospects been brighter, it is highly unlikely that the nature of their training would have helped them attain employment in any segment other than the one for which they were being trained. To move into a higher segment would necessitate conditions in which the number of primary jobs available were far in excess of the numbers of people looking for employment; in other words, a situation in which demand far outstripped supply.

The condition of the female students was different in some cases from that of the men. Women appeared to demonstrate inter-segment mobility. As was suggested by the variable of last grade completed, it might be speculated that the women for whom the training had an effect on mobility were those whose unemployment was not a result of low academic attainment or economic recession, but the result of choice: their previous withdrawal from school was generally not due to academic difficulties, but in order that they might raise a family, hence, their status as "unemployed" is actually due to withdrawal from labour force participation.

On the whole, for only approximately 28% of the students was their situation potentially improved; most remained in the segment in which they had begun or their condition worsened. While the condition of all of those who were unemployed at the time of entry would appear to have improved (if one considers that any employment is better than no employment), the difficulty of using the program entered as a proxy variable for employment becomes apparent. The variable can only really give a strong indication of the labour market segment in which the student is likely to find work, rather than the segment in which the student actually found work. The assumption is that a person trained for the secondary segment is unlikely to find work in the primary segment if the conditions of job availability in the primary segment remain unchanged, that is, that there is no growth in primary segment jobs.

In fact, it would appear that educational attainment, particularly at the grade 12 level and below, will have less and less of an effect on employment if there continues to be a net loss of primary sector jobs. The results then, are not surprising in light of the analysis of labour market segmentation conducted by Carnoy et al. Moreover, even were the number of primary sector jobs available to remain stable, educational attainment below the post-secondary level would, as Weaver (1982) predicts, become increasingly devalued as standards for entry rose in response to a tighter job market. This was already happening at educational and vocational institutions. Therefore, the constriction in the number of primary sector jobs, coupled with the increasing levels of educational attainment required for entry into skills training programs, effectively preclude any hope of the majority of students in programs at the AVCs attaining employment through training.

What is, perhaps, surprising in light of the evidence, is the tenacity with which human capital notions are so strongly upheld and justified by the individuals responsible for the formulation of policies and programs designed to respond to unemployment. Even were the effects of labour market segmentation not widely known (and they appeared not to be), the fact that the enormous increase in resources devoted to provision of skills training has not changed the unemployment rates at all, would seem to call into question the efficacy of the policy responses. Nevertheless, despite evidence to the contrary, the policy-makers, to a man, continued to find explanations for apparent failure, generally suggesting that they were really only "maintaining" employment and it was up to the economy to provide jobs.

Their optimism about the future and their real powerlessness and unwillingness for the province to play any role in shaping that future were strongly evident in their responses to questions about alternative policy responses. All offered explanations which seemed to indicate conflict about the effects of the previous economic "boom": somehow, all of the "easy" money and high salaries had destroyed the moral fibre of the workers; had made them "soft" and "lazy". Some of the language used to decribe the boom - "rocket-ride" and "the goose that laid the golden egg" - suggests a sense of magic or miracle, not brought about by human agency. It would seem that if individuals believe that the workings of the economy are attributed to magical forces, it is not surprising that they would likely also believe, as a consequence, that they have no control over those workings.

This belief is evident in the responses given to the question of what the government could have done during the boom to lessen the severity of the recession. Although the nature of the unemployment being experienced at that time was identified as "structural", the possible responses to it were administrative, which is exemplified by the characterization of "maintaining employment" given in explanation of policy effects. In fact, the response to unemployment could be said to be one of management of statistics rather than management of the economy. The provision of full-time training programs for unemployed individuals removes those individuals from calculations of unemployment rates. For the policy-makers, then, unemployment appears to be an administrative problem for the government which will be solved when the economy "turns itself around".

Despite these notions about the economy, most of the policy-makers still appeared to confound effort with reward when discussing workers: in some way, effort is rewarded on the individual level but not on the societal level. It appears that, unable to blame particular economic structures for the recession, the source of blame is transformed into individualistic notions of "right attitude" and motivation, which can be seen in part by the use of a romantic notion of the past reflected in stories of grandfathers who were willing to work "anywhere" and at "anything". The development of and need for community and family life as important social ties for people is equally transformed into a notion of individual blame, if one recalls the attitudes in need of change which were suggested by the policy-makers.

What is perhaps of even greater interest, are the responses of the Director, Vocational Training Services and the Director, Vocational Training Programs, two individuals whose influence on the programs which result from the policies is more direct. In particular, the explanation for the development of the formula for the AVT training allowances demonstrates an apparently rational process of responding to need, in which is embedded notions of merit and worthiness in defiance of actual need. The reported use of the poverty level established by the Social and Economic Council in Ottawa is an example of this. The poverty level as developed by the Council is an artificial construct; it represents an arithmetic mean calculated by using total income, the distribution of which is demonstrably unequal, hence the use of the mean becomes misleading. The assertion that the AVT amounts are calculated to stay within the Council's figures, would appear to assume 1)that all of the applicants for training allowances are poor and, 2)that even if they are not, then they ought to be. Therefore, the provision of allowances bears no relation to the actual living needs of the individuals. The fact that the base amounts had not been changed in three years, despite increases in the cost-of-living, lends further support to the analysis.

Further, the payment of the allowances determined on a daily basis indicates the existence of particular notions about work. The reported attempt to emulate the payment structure of the workforce, is in fact, the payment structure of only a part of the workforce - that of the secondary segment - hence the conditions of work in the secondary segment were the ones being recreated in the training programs. This can be contrasted with the payment structure of student loans for university students which are paid on a yearly (academic year) basis, much like the payment structure university students will expect to face in the segment of the labour market for which they are being trained. Therefore, remuneration calculated on a daily basis, which is a means of enforcing work in industry, becomes a means of replicating that condition in the AVCs.

In addition, the criteria for funding eligibility reflect a similar contradiction. The justification for the AVT daily rate was that they were trying to treat the students "like adults". However, the determination of the independent/dependent criterion appears to militate against treating the students as adults: the size of the training allowance effectively forced individuals into situations of dependency on parents and relatives, after which, they were no longer considered to be independent, and hence, disadvantaged. The justification offered for this, that it would be difficult to consider someone disadvantaged who lived "at home with parents who make $100,000 a year" and who drives a "Jag to school", appears a spurious one, given the concrete economic realities of the overwhelming majority of students.

The contradictions evident in the explanations offered for AVT training allowances, are equally evident in the justifications for programming offered by the Director, Vocational Training Programs. While asserting that the programs he funded were training for employment, the fact that students were not necessarily getting employment was explained in two ways: 1)that diplomas and degrees only served as a "recommendation to an employer" and, 2)that, in essence, programs were not meant to provide employment, but were demand-driven by students. The implication of the latter explanation is that if the student cannot find employment at the end of training, then he or she made a bad choice, therefore, unemployment becomes an individual responsibility.

Because the policy-makers had no personal contact with students, their beliefs might have been understandable, but the same did not hold true for the gatekeepers at the AVCs; the counsellors had, in many cases, long-term contact with students. Their knowledge of the realities of the students' lives was apparent in their descriptions of the conditions under which the students made application. However, the counsellors appeared to submerge that knowledge and seemed to transform it into individualistic attributions about the causes for the students' situations and the kinds of remediation needed. This was perhaps not surprising given that the counsellors could all be characterized as middle class and all held graduate degrees in Psychology and/or Educational Psychology. Their consistent reference to their own schooling and their own lives for purposes of contrast with that of the students' demonstrated an attitude of apparent indifference or lack of real understanding of the concrete differences between themselves and the students. The implication instead, seemed to be that the only substantive differences between themselves and the students were attitudinal.

Although they were aware of the poverty of the applicants (poverty due to unemployment or underemployment), the fact that some students asked first about AVT allowances was seen as negative by the counsellors. The notion that individuals might return to school solely for a training allowance or because they couldn't find employment did not appear to be consonant with the counsellors' own beliefs about appropriate motivations for returning to school; the implication that returning to school for $360.00 a month did not constitute enough of a "sacrifice" demonstrates a patent disregard of the real difficulties of attempting to live on that amount of income.

The appropriate motivation for students was, in the counsellors' estimation, to be "committed to the program" because they "genuinely wanted to better their situation". Hence, the motivations the counsellors sought appeared to be intrinsic rather than extrinsic. Therefore, the students who were considered to be "ideal" or whom the counsellors believed would be successful, were those who demonstrated a perceived level of responsibility similar to the counsellors'; "someone who's worked for a few years...Somebody who's got life fairly well organized". However, it was not considered by the counsellors that organization of one's life depends on a certain level of economic certitude; that planning necessitates a conceptualization of "future" which individuals whose life is a day-to-day struggle for economic survival could hardly be expected to have.

When a limited notion of future, in the form of occupational goal, was expressed by the applicants, the counsellors characterized them as "unrealistic", though, it would seem that a choice to want to live under better economic circumstances than the ones lived under at present is hardly unrealistic, particularly given the present conditions of life in the secondary segment of the labour market. Therefore, the choice of computer programming or other professions as vocational goals, demonstrates a real knowledge of the conditions of the world of work. However, the counsellors did not agree, and saw it as their function, when confronted by these "unrealistic" choices, to "downgrade" the students' aspirations, characterizing the students as "impulsive" and "self-gratifying". The need to downgrade aspirations implies a knowledge and acceptance of the limited opportunities provided by the structure of the economy. By inverting their knowledge of the economic conditions which are faced by their students and attributing those conditions to individual charateristics, the counsellors appeared to collude in the maintenance of the very structures which they purported the institution was intended to overcome.

The negative behaviours of the students which the counsellors reported, were, in their estimation, subject to change and this is where the counsellors felt the institution to have its most beneficial effect; the socialization of students into better attitudes, better self-concepts and better inter-personal relationships could materially alter the conditions of the students' futures.

The better attitudes to which the counsellors referred were really attitudes of the middle class, thereby implying that a change in behaviours would cause a change in economic condition. In fact, the causal relationship was considered so strong, that when asked if a change in material conditions might effect a change in attitudes and motivation, almost all of the counsellors disagreed. The response seems to imply that the counsellors believed that the behaviours of the students were responses to separate cultural norms rather than the economic exigencies of unemployment and social assistance.

The function of counselling then, was two-fold: to help many of the students adjust to lowered aspirations for themselves by helping them choose an "appropriate" vocational goal and, to help students who believed that "the world owes them a living" and that the sources of their problems were external to themselves, internalize their locus of control, particularly in relation to their economic condition. In other words, preparing them to live with unemployment.

In conclusion then, it would seem, that while the attitudes of the policy-makers were rooted in human capital notions with which the counsellors disagreed, the counsellors' attitudes and behaviours vitiated the effects of the policies rather than mitigated them. This is surprising given the different views held by the counsellors, in particular about the relationship between education and employment. However, it is perhaps less surprising when one considers that there was fundamental agreement between the counsellors and policy-makers about individual responsibility for unemployment.

IMPLICATIONS

As is discussed in Richardson and Henning (1984), most Western governments use a mixture of policies - some to stimulate labour demand and some to influence labour supply, certain policy levers are not considered because of the dominant political/economic culture of the country. Two policies mentioned earlier - a Guaranteed Annual Income and long-term public sector job creation - are examples of such policy levers which are not consonant with the dominant ideology expressed by the policy-makers interviewed in this study. Attitudes about the causes of unemployment and, in a sense, where to apportion blame, are direct influences on the conceptualizations of possible responses. That is, despite reference to supposed objective laws of the marketplace, in fact, it appears that it is fundamental notions about human nature which undergird economic policies. Policies such as the aforementioned Guaranteed Annual income; meaningful job creation; training support in relation to actual living needs; provision of daycare, transportation and housing for individuals undertaking training - all are examples of possible options which are predicated on a notion of desert based on need rather than merit.

The fact that these options are not chosen demonstrates the particular attitudes of those with the power, at present, to formulate policies and implement them. The attitudes expressed by the policy-makers and gatekeepers were a result of a number of factors, the strongest being their class position; they appeared to hold all of the notions attributed to the middle class in the literature. Even when confronted by evidence to the contrary or by conflicting evidence, their explanations were firmly rooted in the ideology of individualism and the Protestant work ethic.

However, believing that an individual's class position is the sole determinant of that individual's beliefs is too mechanistic, for there have certainly been many people born into the middle class who have developed a system of belief quite different from the dominant one characterized in this study. However, speculation on what factors have resulted in that change is beyond the scope of this study. One suggestion is that personal experience of unemployment might lead to a change in attitudes. The fact that an increasing rate of unemployment had no direct effect on either group, other than to assure them their jobs as "poverty workers", seemed to hinder them from understanding the situation from their clients' point of view.

Had they been able to empathize with the realities of the students, even while constrained by the structures already developed, there might have been different ways in which to act within those structures. Acknowledging the realities of historical structures and the contradictions which they create, while refusing to accept the constraints uncritically is acquiesence. Acquiesence is a situation in which the potential for change is acknowledged, but the means for that change are not yet developed. However, acknowledging the realities of historical structures and continuing to accept and actively support the constraints is collusion, and it is this notion which characterizes the actions of the counsellors.

The effects of the homogeneity of the counsellors' backgrounds and attitudes could have possibly been mitigated by the choice of counsellors with more varied backgrounds; varied politically and economically. Of course, this presumes that the institution would want a change in the counsellors' behaviour, a presumption which would be false given the current dominant ideology evident in the attitudes of the policy-makers.

Equally devastating to the futures of the students at the AVCs was the implicit acceptance of the effects of labour market segmentation (though not the existence of it) by the policy-makers and gatekeepers. The belief that there will always be hewers of wood and drawers of water implies a static and fatalistic image of society. Operationalizing that image, as did the policy-makers and counsellors, first, by transforming it into individualized characteristics of "employability" and appropriate "motivation" and then, by compelling individuals to accept those notions through counselling (under the guise of "reality therapy") appeared to do more to prevent change than effect it; implicit in helping individuals to "cope" with and accommodate a particular situation is the notion that the situation cannot be changed. It was unfortunate that the constraints on this study precluded interviews with students to determine to what degree they internalized the counsellors' attitudes after counselling; the intention of the counsellors was evident, but the effects could only be speculated upon, given the information available about the students.

One thing _is_ certain, however, as long as policy responses remain as they have in Alberta, expanding education and creating minimum wage jobs may lower unemployment rate _statistics_ somewhat, but will do little to alleviate the misery of those at the lower end of income distribution.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As mentioned previously, a study which included student perceptions would aid in an understanding of the possible conflict in perceptions between the beneficiaries of government policy and those who formulate the policy. A more fruitful area of study, at least from the point-of-view of the students and the unemployed, might be a study of the ways in which mass organization of the poor and unemployed have occurred both historically and at present to change particular economic structures which are oppressive to those groups. The oft-cited trade-off between social programs and economic prosperity has been belied by the recent cut-backs in social programs and the continued decline in the Alberta economy. The economic notion of a zero sum game which the trade-off represents, has not been demonstrated to be true in Sweden and West Germany. Hence, further research into alternative economic policies and structures would seem to be warranted by the present situation.

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